

# Insider's Guide To New York



The New York Botanical Garden, established in 1891, is a National Historic Landmark

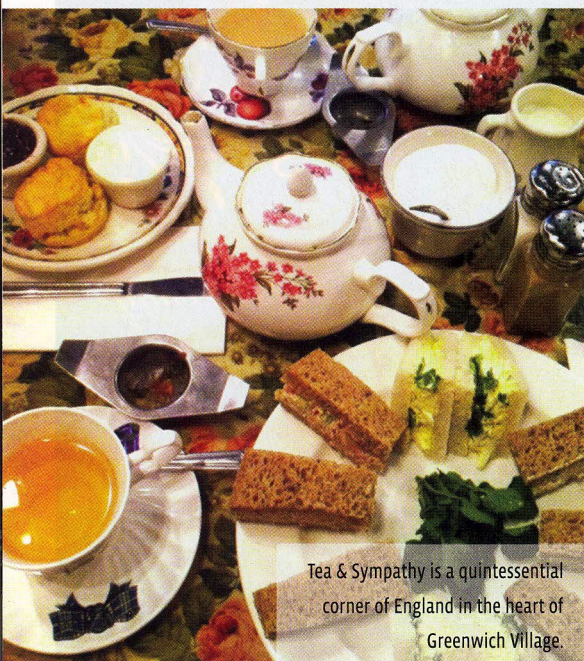
There was a time when I felt overwhelmed by the Big Apple, but after many visits, I now move comfortably around the city without a map and venture beyond the Empire State Building to lesser-known places. This level of confidence is due, in part, to friends and family members who live in the city and have shared their knowledge and insider perspective with me.

My sister gets credit for introducing me to Tea & Sympathy, a tiny hole in the wall on Greenwich Avenue that serves the best “ploughman’s lunch” and pot of tea in America. The menu includes bangers ‘n’ mash, shepherd’s pie, and Welsh rarebit, but I always opt for the classic pub combo of sharp cheddar, crusty bread, and Branston pickle. With only nine tables, it isn’t surprising to find a line of locals waiting for a spot, but the all-things-British shop next door provides a good diversion. ([www.teaandsympathynewyork.com](http://www.teaandsympathynewyork.com))

New York’s multi-cultural population is also represented at Sosa Borella, an Italian-Argentine restaurant in the theatre district. The same “connection” that helped us get *Book of Mormon* tickets recommended this spot. I laughed myself silly at the show and enjoyed the fresh spinach linguini with salmon I ordered for dinner. My nephew, who’d recently been to Argentina, chose a yummy Malbec that we all savored.

While I rely on locals for dining recommendations, I find them turning to me for ideas on places to stay. My latest “find” is the delightful Library Hotel on Madison Avenue at 41st Street. Here, a homey feel is generated by staff who remember everyone’s name; the second floor Reading Room, where guests are treated to complimentary breakfast, pre-dinner wine and snacks, and 24/7 tea, coffee, fruit, and cookies; and a beautiful 14th-floor rooftop bar and sundeck terrace. I love lingering in The Reading Room, where walls of books, classical music, and *The New York Times* create an enticing ambience, and on the terrace where sunlight streams through the conservatory ceiling.

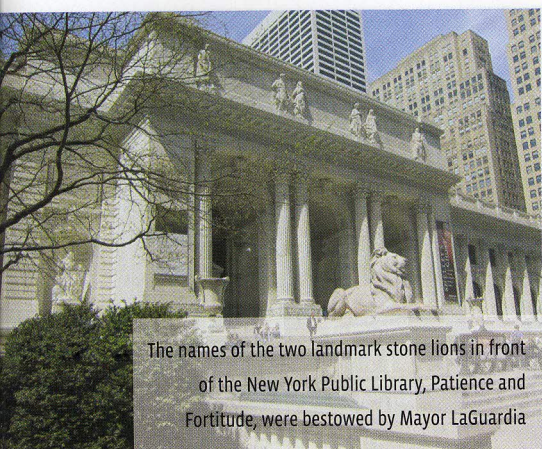
Each of the ten guestroom floors acknowledges one of the ten categories of the Dewey Decimal System, and each of the 60 rooms is stocked with books befitting its category. Having said that, I was more interested in looking out the windows of our wonderful corner king room (#606) than in



Tea & Sympathy is a quintessential corner of England in the heart of Greenwich Village.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ADAMS/HANSEN STOCK PHOTOS AND COURTESY OF EIJHANA OSSA





The names of the two landmark stone lions in front of the New York Public Library, Patience and Fortitude, were bestowed by Mayor LaGuardia

browsing the book collection.  
([www.libraryhotel.com](http://www.libraryhotel.com))

Did I mention that the majestic New York Public Library is across the street? Even more important is the fact that Grand Central Station is right behind the hotel. This was super handy when we took the Metro-North Railroad to The New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx.

These gardens are some of the best in the world and are a must-see for anyone who's even remotely interested in horticulture — actually, anyone interested in beauty. When we

were there in April, vertical walls of orchids filled the Victorian-style Conservatory that is the focal point of the 250-acre site. The breathtaking displays were created by famed French botanist and artist Patrick Blanc.  
([www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org))

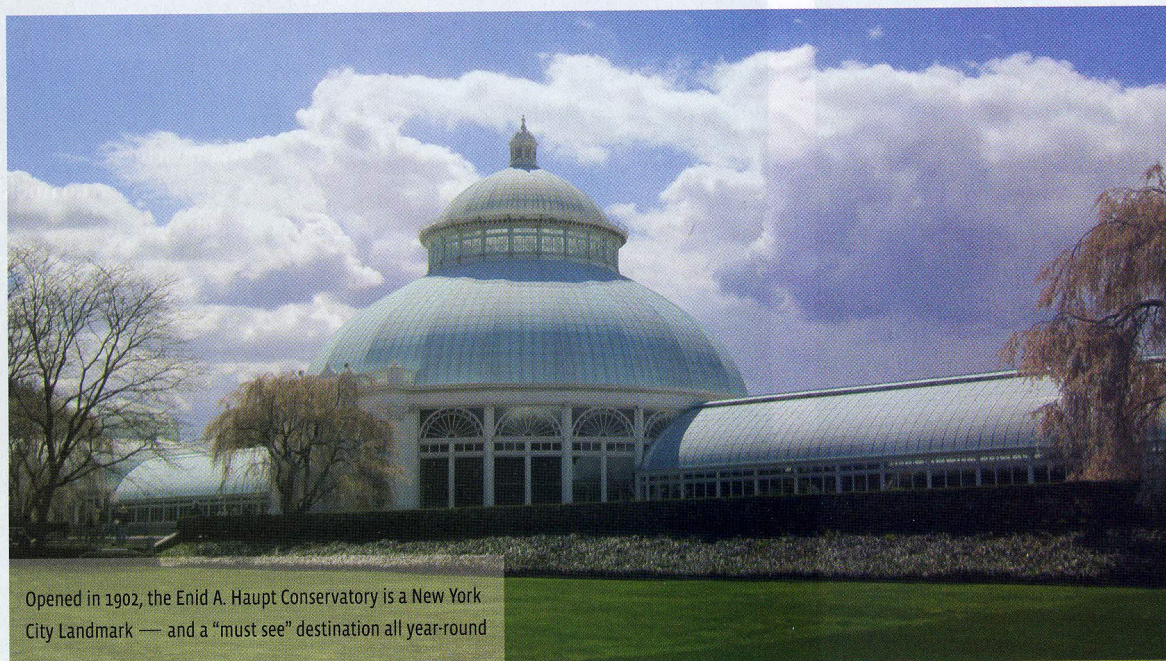
If you go between now and October 21, you can visit a re-creation of Monet's Garden in Giverny, France in the Conservatory's glasshouse galleries and outdoor courtyards. Two rarely seen paintings by the French Impressionist artist will be on view, and a series of events, including chamber music concerts, films, and hands-on art for kids will accompany this exhibit. Can't visit the gardens until winter? No worries. You'll be just in time for Gingerbread Adventures and the Holiday Train Show that includes 15 G-scale train layouts through New York landmarks.

Having enjoyed a day in the Bronx, I'm now ready to explore Brooklyn. In fact, I'm tempted to



The rooftop terrace at the Library Hotel is a cozy spot for a drink with a city view

stay at the red brick Wythe Hotel, which was once a cooperage where barrels and casks were made. The waterfront location provides great Manhattan skyline views.  
([www.wythehotel.com](http://www.wythehotel.com))



Opened in 1902, the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory is a New York City Landmark — and a "must see" destination all year-round



When I go, “Big Rick” Kadlub will be my guide. His family has been in the neighborhood for 120 years, and his walking tours include lots of personal stories, plus Prospect Park, Al Capone’s childhood home, and the Soldiers and Sailors Arch.

Landscape architect Frederick Olmstead designed Prospect Park in Brooklyn and Central Park in Manhattan, where I love to walk and picnic — just like the locals.

ELIZABETH HANSEN



The Orchid Show at The New York Botanical Garden, which featured breathtaking walls of colorful plants, was designed by French botanist Patrick Blanc

## MERCEDES-BENZ FASHION WEEK, SEPTEMBER 6-13



Design by  
Oscar de la Renta

International fashion week season is right around the corner. It starts at Lincoln Center in New York, and if you don’t already have hotel reservations — “forgetaboutit.” Nothing fills New York City like fashion week, when top international designers and the next generation of emerging talent take center stage. The energy of the week is palpable as you walk throughout the city.

The Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Spring 2013 Collections will be presented in 80+ runway shows. In addition, events, parties, and promotions will welcome 100,000+ industry professionals to the city. There will be some high-profile debuts during New York Fashion Week this season, the most highly anticipated being the first runway show for Katie Holmes’ and Jeanne Yang’s line **Holmes & Yang**, which will be held at the Bowery Hotel on September 9. **MM6 Maison Martin Margiela** is having its first formal Fashion Week presentation at its headquarters in Chelsea on September 8. **Marimekko** is staging a fashion show on September 10. And **Oscar de la Renta** is planning a standalone runway show for his childrenswear line on September 12.

Fashion Week is held in New York every February and September and at other times of the year in Paris, London, and Milan.