



A GUIDE TO PARK SLOPE

As you stroll through Park Slope, you may think you're in Victorian London. But this is Brooklyn's largest landmark district, with block after block of stately row houses, shady trees and interesting shops and restaurants. The area's name derives from Prospect Park, the 526-acre greensward designed by Olmstead and Vaux (who also created Central Park) and the long westward slope down to the Gowanus Canal.

Where is Park Slope?

Park Slope is in south Brooklyn, bounded by Flatbush Avenue to the north, Prospect Avenue to the south, Prospect Park to the east and 4th Avenue to the west.



It's Easy to Get to Park Slope

Take either the #2 or #3 train from Manhattan's west side to Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn. From the east side, take the #4 or #5 train to Nevins Street in Brooklyn; cross the platform to the #2 or #3 to Grand Army Plaza. Or take the Q train to the 7th Avenue stop in Brooklyn, a block down Flatbush Avenue from Grand Army Plaza.

If you end your visit on 5th Avenue, don't hike back to Grand Army Plaza. Instead, walk north to Bergen Street, turn right and go up one block. Cross Flatbush Avenue to the Bergen Street station next to the Yummy Taco restaurant and catch the #2 or #3 to Manhattan.

About Park Slope

Park Slope is one of several neighborhoods, including Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens, Boerum Hill and Fort Greene, collectively known as "Brownstone Brooklyn." Its history dates back to the nation's birth. The Battle of Brooklyn, a critical Revolutionary War battle, was fought in what is now Prospect Park on August 27, 1776. The Americans retreated down present-day 1st Street to a stone farmhouse (see "Things to See and Do") where the Maryland Volunteers made a last stand against the British. Although the regiment was defeated, it bought enough time for Gen. George Washington to float his troops across the East River that night, preventing an early end to the dream of independence.

Like many urban areas, Park Slope declined during the depression and in later years as residents moved to the suburbs. A revival began in the late 1960s, with the



restoration of the then low-cost, often dilapidated brownstones by young people priced out of Manhattan. Gentrification continues today, and real estate prices have soared.

Things to See and Do in Park Slope

1 The **Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Arch** in the center of Grand Army Plaza was built in 1892 and stands 80 feet high. This official New York City Landmark celebrates the Union Army's victory in the Civil War.

Arrayed around Grand Army Plaza are several of Brooklyn's leading cultural institutions: **2** **Prospect Park**▲, **3** the **Brooklyn Public Library**▲, **4** the **Brooklyn Museum**▲, and **5** the **Brooklyn**

Botanic Garden▲. The latter two are a short walk down Eastern Parkway, past the left side of the library (or go to the Eastern Parkway stop on the #2 or #3 train).

Here are a few Park Slope places worth a special look:

6 The **Montauk Club**, 25 8th Avenue, corner of Lincoln Place, was built as a private gentlemen's club in 1891 and resembles a Venetian palazzo. The structure features both Native American (Montauk) and Renaissance motifs on the front façade. The side door to the left was once the women's entrance; women could enter only to dine with male club members. Today the club is still private, but membership is increasingly diverse. The upper two floors have been converted to condominium apartments.

7 **Montgomery Place**, a one-block street, between Carroll and Garfield Streets that runs from Prospect Park West to 8th Avenue, is a rarity: it was developed as a single, unified real estate venture. In 1887-1892 the developer commissioned renowned 19th-century architect C.P.H. Gilbert to design 20 of the block's 46 houses to create a harmonious streetscape.



8 The **Litchfield Villa** on Prospect Park's western edge at 4th Street is a Tuscan-style villa, the oldest mansion (1857) in Park Slope. It was the home of Edwin Litchfield, a railroad tycoon who owned virtually all the land that now comprises Park Slope. He sold the land for Prospect Park to the then-independent City of Brooklyn. The building is now the New York City

Parks Department's administration building for Brooklyn.

9 The **Squad 1 Firehouse**, 786 Union Street, is an elite New York fire Department unit that lost 12 men at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. A wooden statue memorializes them as well as all 343 firefighters who died that day.



10 The **Park Slope Food Co-op**▲, 782 Union Street, between 7th and 6th Avenues, which started in 1973, is one of the oldest and largest (10,000-plus members) food co-operatives in the country. You may visit the store (ask at the front for someone to show you around)—but only members may shop!

*Greeter's Secret: Just across the street from the Co-op and the firehouse is the **Tea Lounge**▲, 837 Union, a large, comfortable place that offers many kinds of tea, coffee, and light eats.*



11 The huge, 19th century **Ansonia Clock Factory**, located on 7th Avenue, between 12th and 13th Streets, in what is now called the South Slope, exemplifies the area's ongoing gentrification. After shutting down in 1930, the complex deteriorated for decades. In 1982 developers began converting it into co-operative and condominium apartments, a transformation completed only a few years ago. *Greeter's Secret: Across the street from the Ansonia is the **Bagel Hole**▲, 400 7th Avenue. The bagels here are authentic—hard, chewy and delicious—not the puffy, bread-like versions pretending to be bagels now found almost everywhere.*



12 The **Old Stone House**, a Dutch farmhouse built in 1699, is the site of the patriots' defeat during the Battle of Brooklyn. One of the few remaining vestiges of New York's revolutionary past, it's located in a playground at 3rd Street, between 4th and 5th Avenues and contains some fascinating exhibits.



▲ Wheelchair accessible



Shopping

Park Slope is famous locally for its “stoop sales,” the city equivalent of yard sales, and a large flea market in front of **P.S. 321** on 7th Avenue, between 1st and 2nd Streets. Enjoy them every weekend when the weather is good.

Book lovers can linger and browse at **Park Slope Books**▲, 200 7th Avenue, between 2nd and 3rd Streets, which is well stocked with used books.



The Clay Pot▲, 162 7th Avenue, between Garfield and 1st Streets, is known for its handcrafted pottery and wedding rings.

Many of the trendier shops are located on newly revitalized 5th Avenue, which is now a major shopping destination even for jaded Manhattan types.

For attractive vintage clothing, try **Beacon's Closet**▲, 220 5th Avenue, between Union and President Streets. For top-quality women's lingerie and accessories, go to **Diana Kane**▲, 229B 5th Avenue, between President and Carroll Streets. There are several other upscale women's stores on 5th Avenue.

Cog & Pearl▲, 190 5th Avenue, on the corner of Sackett Street, has unusual gifts, such as pocketbooks made of upholstery fabric from vintage cars and bowls crafted from old LP records. **Bob & Judi's Coolectibles**, 217 5th Avenue, between Union and President Streets, is a grab-bag of a shop bursting with everything from pricey antique jewelry to inexpensive mid-century items.

Sleek modern furniture, high-end housewares and even jewelry can be had at **Matter**▲, 227 5th Avenue, between President and Carroll Streets.

When It's Time to Eat

Park Slope boasts many excellent restaurants, most of which are on 5th Avenue. A new place seems to open almost every week, so read the menus and take your pick! Here are just a few possibilities:

For great Peruvian food, including succulent bargain-priced roast chicken and tasty ceviches, try **Coco Roco**▲, 392 5th Avenue, between 6th and 7th Streets.

La Villa▲, 261 5th Avenue, between 1st and 2nd Streets, is a highly praised Italian restaurant with excellent pizzas. For lighter fare, enjoy a pressed panini sandwich on crisp focaccia bread at **Press 195**▲, 195 5th Avenue, between Berkeley and Union Streets.

There is a trio of good French bistros within a few blocks of each other: **Moutarde**▲, 239 5th Avenue, corner of Carroll Street; **Cocotte**▲, 337 5th Avenue, corner of 4th Street; and Belleville, 330 5th Street, corner of 5th Avenue. Vegetarians gravitate to The **Vegan Spot**▲, 156 5th Avenue, between Douglass and Degraw Streets. (*Please note: Cocotte is wheelchair accessible through a side entrance with one step.*)

On 7th Avenue, check out **Mango**, 52 7th Avenue, between St. John's Place and Lincoln Place, for Thai food, or the **Second Street Café**, 189 7th Avenue at 2nd Street, for homey American. If you're looking for a modest trattoria, try **Sotto Voce**, 225 7th Avenue, between 3rd and 4th Streets.

Links

For an overview of Park Slope, including pictures, go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park_Slope%2C_Brooklyn

For information about the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, visit <http://www.bbg.org/> (*Greeter's Secret: Be sure to see the spectacular cherry blossoms in late April or early May. Check website for dates of expected peak blooming.*)

For the Brooklyn Museum, go to <http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/>

The Old Stone House — <http://www.historichousetrust.org/>

The Park Slope Food Co-op — <http://www.foodcoop.com/>

About Big Apple Greeter

Founded in 1992, Big Apple Greeter's mission is to enhance New York City's worldwide image while enriching the City experience for its visitors. Connecting with business and leisure travelers from all over the US and the world, Greeters take visitors on informal, unscripted walks through one or more neighborhoods in any of the five boroughs, promote tourism throughout the city, and help visitors discover the ease of using public transportation. Over 300 volunteer Greeters speak almost 25 languages and enjoy giving their time and energy back to their hometown. Since its founding, Big Apple Greeter – a free public service – has welcomed



over 75,000 visitors and been featured in thousands of newspapers, magazines, and television and radio programs all over the world, reaching an audience of over one billion potential visitors to New York City. Big Apple Greeter is proud to partner with NYC & Company, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Make-A-Wish

Foundation® of Metro New York.

About the Global Greeter Network

Big Apple Greeter is proud to be part of the Global Greeter Network, a voluntary association of welcoming programs around the world, all based on the Big Apple Greeter model: free and open to all visitors; offer greeter services as an individual or very small group experience (no more than 6 visitors); and are characterized by enthusiastic, local residents who love their home city, love to meet people from around the world, and volunteer to conduct these visits.



The Global Greeter Network currently spans six countries on four continents and includes the following members: Cicerones de Buenos Aires in Argentina; Adelaide Greeters and Melbourne Greeter Service in Australia; Tap in TO! (Toronto) in Canada; Thanet Greeters in Kent, England; Paris Greeter and Les Greeters de Nantes in France; Big Apple Greeter (New York City), Chicago Greeter, Houston Greeters and Golden Heart Greeter (Fairbanks, Alaska) in the United States.

Big Apple Greeter welcomes all visitors without regard to race, color, creed, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status or disability.

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