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The Big Apple Greeter Guide to

# Chinatown

**TO VISITORS, MANHATTAN'S CHINATOWN HOLDS THE PROMISE OF EXOTICA,** but to New York City's Chinese and Asian residents, it's the heartland of their culture and the place for the freshest and cheapest fish, fruits and vegetables as well as the best Chinese meals. Rich in tradition, Chinatown has roots in the old world, but very much has its pulse in the new.

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# The Big Apple Greeter Guide to Chinatown



THE MAHAYANA BUDDHIST TEMPLE



CHINATOWN BRANCH OF HSBC

## Where is Chinatown?

Located on the east side of Lower Manhattan, Chinatown is bordered on the north by Little Italy; to the north and west by Soho; to the west by TriBeCa; to the south by the City Hall area and on its east by the Lower East Side.

## About Chinatown

Lower Manhattan is host to the largest Chinatown in the United States which also happens to be one of the oldest neighborhoods in New York City. Founded in the 1870s by Chinese immigrants, Chinatown offers a unique historical and cultural experience not found anywhere else in the world.

Home to some of the oldest residential buildings in New York City, Chinatown is renowned for its vast array of dining experiences, shopping, landmarks, cultural treasures and nightlife.

## It's Easy to Get to Chinatown

**M** BY SUBWAY: 6, J, M, N, Q, R, W and Z trains to Canal Street.

**BY BUS:** Bus lines that service Chinatown include the M1, M6, M9, M15, M22, M103, B39 and B51.

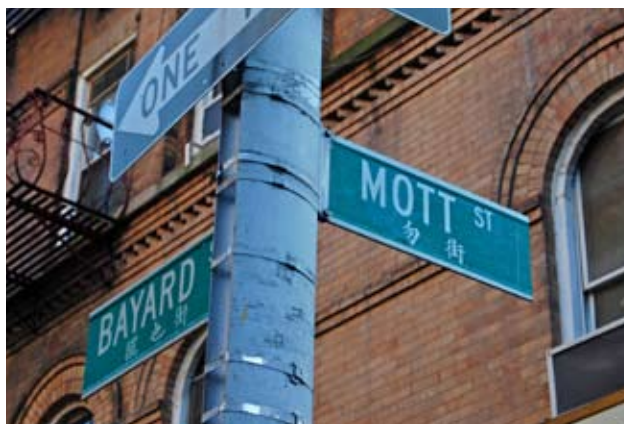
## Attractions

**1 THE MUSEUM OF CHINESE IN AMERICA** at 215 Centre Street just north of Canal Street houses a fascinating collection of documents and artifacts dedicated to preserving and presenting the history, heritage, culture and diverse experiences of people of Chinese descent in America. See their website at <http://www.mocanyc.org> for information about exhibits, hours and admissions.

**2** The Chinese are devoted savers as the great number of banks in Chinatown attest. At 58 Bowery on the southwest corner of Canal Street is the

**CHINATOWN BRANCH OF HSBC.** Housed in a landmark neo-Byzantine 1924 building with a gigantic bronzed dome, the bank occupies an historic

**GREETER'S SECRET:** Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the Chinese revolutionary, political leader and the father of modern China, lived in New York at one point in his career and is primarily associated with Mott Street. His office was located at 7 Mott Street between Mosco and Worth Streets.



spot. A plaque notes the building is on the spot where George Washington began his march into the city after it was evacuated by the British on November 25, 1783. The site was then the home to the infamous Bull's Head Tavern.

**3 THE MAHAYANA BUDDHIST TEMPLE** at 133 Canal Street near the Bowery houses what is believed to be the largest Buddha in the city. The 16-foot golden statue rests on a lotus flower and has a blue halo.

**4 CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION** at 29 Mott Street at Pell Street is home to the largest Chinese Roman Catholic community in the U.S. The 1801 stone rubble building began life as a protestant church with congregants originally from Germany, Scandinavia and England. In 1853, it became a Catholic church with mainly Irish and then Italian parishioners. To learn more, see their website at [http://www.transfigurationnyc.org/pages/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1&lang=en](http://www.transfigurationnyc.org/pages/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1&lang=en). One sign of the ethnic change is the Mulberry Street funeral home associated with the church. Originally known as the Chas. Baciagalupo Resting Parlour, it is now called Ng Nook Funeral Services. However, an Italian brass band still plays during some of the funeral services.



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**5** At **65 MOTT STREET** near Pell Street is the first building in New York to be built as a tenement. Erected in 1824 (and still standing), this is a typical example of the tenements of the era which were rental properties that barely met the minimum residential building standards.

**6** At 18 Bowery at Pell Street is the **EDWARD MOONEY HOUSE**, the oldest row house in New York City. Built in 1785, the architecture combines late Georgian and early Federal styles.

**7** At the Bowery and Division Streets, see the **STATUE OF CONFUCIUS** erected in 1984 along with **CONFUCIUS PLAZA**, a giant-sized housing complex north of the statue.

**8** Adjacent to Confucius Plaza, is **CHATHAM SQUARE** at the Bowery and East Broadway. Within is the statue of **LIN ZE XUE**, the 19th century Chinese official and anti-drug hero reputed for having started the First Opium War. The statue was erected by the Fujianese populace of Chinatown and faces East Broadway, the epicenter of the Fujianese population in the area.

**9** **COLUMBUS PARK** (west of Mulberry and south of Bayard Streets) is the community's outdoor "rec room". For tots, there's a playground; for teens, baseball and basketball courts; for adults (mainly seniors), there are Chinese

**GREETER'S SECRET:** Dating to the 1890s, Columbus Park replaced the notorious Mulberry Bend, a festering slum that was publicized by reporter and social reformer Jacob Riis's photographs and writings.

exercise. In sunny weather, elderly men air their songbirds in handsome bamboo cages. To learn more, see their website at <http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/Mo15>.

## Shopping

**10** Just as Manhattan began its development downtown, so did the first jewelry district. Having withstood the test of time, the area around the **BOWERY AND CANAL STREET** is still home to the second largest jewelry district in New York City. With a wide range of shops and goods in varying styles, the only things behind the times are the prices.



checkers and dominos, card games and friends with which to gossip and

**11** **NEW KAM MAN** at 200 Canal Street between Mott and Mulberry Streets is one of the largest and best known grocery stores in Chinatown. This resource for Chinese foodstuffs is also known for its kitchenware department with its wide range of utensils and teapots, as well as its large assortment of teas.

**12** **TING'S GIFT SHOP** at 18 Doyers Street at Pell Street is one of the oldest gift shops in Chinatown. Chock-a-block full of inexpensive and colorful gift items, Ting's promises something for everyone to delight the eye and go easy on the purse.

**13** **ORIENTAL CULTURE ENTERPRISES** at 13 Elizabeth Street between Canal and Bayard Streets is one of the largest Chinese bookstores in North America. In addition to its wide selection of books, including a large section of English-Chinese dictionaries, Oriental Culture Enterprises also has a highly regarded art gallery with numerous works for viewing and for sale. To learn more, see their website at <http://www.oceweb.com/en/index.htm>.

**14** **YUNHONG CHOPSTICKS SHOP** at 50 Mott Street at Bayard Street is a unique shop that offers chopsticks of all types—engraved, printed and



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painted in materials ranging from plastic to mahogany, ox bone and bamboo. Be sure to examine their eco-friendly travel chopsticks! To learn more, see their website at <http://www.happychopsticks.com>.

## When It's Time to Eat

**15** **NOM WAH TEA PARLOR** at 13 Doyers Street near Pell Street, built in 1920, is the oldest tea parlor in Chinatown and offers more than 20 varieties of tea and 40 varieties of dim sum. The interior remains largely unchanged. Be sure to try their almond and walnut cookies.

**GREETER'S SECRET:** Nom Wah Tea Parlor was featured in the Spiderman movie.

**16** **JOE'S SHANGHAI** at 9 Pell Street between the Bowery and Doyers Street is renowned for the quality of its soup dumplings. The lines are long, but worth the wait.

**17** **HOP KEE RESTAURANT** at 21 Mott Street at Mosco Street is an old-time Cantonese restaurant that offers freshly prepared foods, affordable prices and good service. Known for its whole fried fish, the restaurant also has late hours.

**18** **THE CHINATOWN ICE CREAM FACTORY** at 65 Bayard Street near Mott Street offers homemade ice cream in flavors you don't find in other places. Try a scoop of the almond cookie, mango or taro. To learn more, see their website at <http://chinatownicecreamfactory.com>.



**19** What is a visit to Chinatown without dim sum (dumplings)? The neighborhood abounds with excellent purveyors. For something a little different, you may want to consider the **VEGETARIAN DIM SUM HOUSE** at 24 Pell Street near Mott Street. Meals are vegan, fresh and inexpensive.

## Culture

**20** **P.S. 23** at 70 Mulberry Street near Bayard Street is a century-old public school building now used as a community center. It houses everything from the Chen Dance Center and senior center to the Refugee Vocational Training Program. The Chen Dance Center offers performances at the Center itself and other venues in the city. For a schedule, see their website at <http://www.chendancecenter.org>.

**21** Chinatown is a vibrant neighborhood that teems with cultural events. Take for example the **LUNAR NEW YEAR** that is heralded with a colorful and noisy celebration spread over at least two weekends and abounds with dancing lions, bands and general merriment. Its date

can fall anywhere from January 1 through mid-February. To learn more about this and other local celebrations and activities going on throughout the year, visit <http://www.explorechinatown.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 collectively 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 90,000 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 seven 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; VisitBrighton Greeters and Kent Greeters in England; Paris Greeter, Les Greeters de Nantes, Greeters62 (Pas-de-Calais), Lyon City Greeters and Marseille Provence Greeters in France; Den Haag Greeters in the Netherlands; Big Apple Greeter (New York City), Chicago Greeter, and Houston Greeters in the United States.

You may learn more about Big Apple Greeter and its many services on our website: [www.bigapplegreeter.org](http://www.bigapplegreeter.org) or by emailing us at [information@bigapplegreeter.org](mailto:information@bigapplegreeter.org)



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