

Big Apple Greeter welcomes you to New York City!



Big Apple Greeter
New York City

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The Big Apple Greeter Guide to **Jamaica**

ONE OF THE PREDOMINANTLY AFRICAN-AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOODS in Queens, Jamaica in recent years has had a large influx of West Indians, Indians, Arabs, Russians and Dominicans making for a rich ethnic mix. An important seat of government and a major commercial area, Jamaica offers its visitors unique architecture and a great day of shopping.

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The Big Apple Greeter Guide to Jamaica



KING MANOR DINING ROOM



GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH GRAVEYARD

Where is Jamaica?

Located in Southeastern Queens, Jamaica is bordered on the south by JFK International Airport, on the north by Union Turnpike, on the west by South Richmond Hill and on the east by St. Albans and Hollis.

About Jamaica

Settled under Dutch rule in 1656 and named Rustdorp, Jamaica did not get its name until English rule in 1664 when a variant of the Native American Lenape word Jameco meaning beaver was adopted. By 1776, Jamaica has become a trading post for farmers and their produce. During the American Revolution, 56 Minutemen from Jamaica played an active part in the Battle of Long Island and, yes, George Washington did actually sleep here in 1790 in a local tavern. Initially serving as a seat of government for the area, Jamaica today is a vibrant urban community filled with wonderful architecture.

It's Easy to Get to Jamaica:

M BY SUBWAY: E, J or Z trains to Sutphin Boulevard or Jamaica Center. **BY BUS:** Bus lines that service Jamaica include the Q4, Q5, Q6, Q8, Q9, Q20A, Q20B, Q24, Q25, Q30, Q31, Q34, Q40, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q54, Q56, Q60, Q65, Q83, Q84, Q85, Q110, Q111, Q112, Q113 and N4.

BY LONG ISLAND RAILROAD: From Penn Station to Sutphin Boulevard daily. For schedules, check the website at <http://www.mta.info/lirr>.

GREETER'S SECRET:

Rufus King was one of the most outspoken opponents of slavery in the U.S. in the early 19th century.

In 1820, he delivered two of the most radical speeches then heard in the Senate against slavery and openly opposed the admission of Missouri as a slave state.

BY AIRTRAIN: The Airtrain from JFK International Airport stops in Jamaica next to the Sutphin Boulevard Long Island Rail Road station.

Things to See and Do in Jamaica

1 KING MANOR MUSEUM at 150-03 Jamaica Avenue between 150th

and 153rd Streets was the home to Rufus King, a framer and signer of the U.S. Constitution, one of the first U.S. senators from New York and an ambassador to Great Britain under four U.S. Presidents. This landmarked museum, set in a lovely 18th century farmhouse located in a beautiful 11 acre park, focuses on the roles Rufus King and his son, New York Governor John Alsop King, played in the early antislavery movement and gives insight into life in the early 19th century. To learn more, see the website at www.kingmanor.org.

2 GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND GRAVEYARD at 155-15 Jamaica Avenue between 153rd Street and Parsons Boulevard is a landmarked 1862 Gothic Revival building with a striking appearance, including a broached spire and several WPA murals painted during the Great Depression. The open churchyard is the final resting place for many members of the King family, including Rufus King.

3 PROSPECT CEMETERY on 159th Street between Beaver Road and Liberty Avenue was established in 1668 and is the oldest cemetery in Queens. Serving as the final



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JAMAICA SAVINGS BANK BUILDING

THE SIDEWALK CLOCK

resting place for many prominent Queens families, its **CHAPEL** was recently renovated and dedicated to world famous jazz musician Illinois Jacquet. It is also a designated city landmark.

4 The former **JAMAICA SAVINGS BANK** building at 161-02 Jamaica Avenue at 160th Street was completed in 1898 and is considered the finest example of Beaux Arts architecture in Queens. This landmarked building is admired for its delicate ironwork and limestone façade.

5 The former **REGISTER BUILDING** at 161-04 Jamaica Avenue at 161st Street was completed in 1898 and for 76 years served as the County Registry for title deeds. With an imposing Neo-Italian Renaissance façade, this landmarked building now houses the **JAMAICA CENTER FOR ARTS AND LEARNING**. The center offers arts education and sponsors art shows throughout the year. To learn more, see the website at <http://www.jcal.org>.

6 **LA CASINA** at 90-33 160th Street between Jamaica and 90th Avenues is a rare example of the streamlined Moderne style of architecture sporting a ziggurat

façade and neon sign. Once a nightclub, this 1934 building is now the location of the Jamaica Business Resource Center.

7 **THE TITLE GUARANTEE COMPANY** building at 90-04 161st Street at 90th Avenue is a characteristic Art Deco building completed in 1928. Its exterior ornamentation was designed by famed sculptor Rene Paul Chambellan whose work includes Radio City Music Hall.



REGISTER BUILDING

8 **THE FIREHOUSE** at 89-56 162nd Street near Jamaica Avenue is a wonderful example of Classical Revival architecture. Completed in 1925, the building has been renovated for commercial use.

9 **THE SIDEWALK CLOCK** at 161-11 Jamaica Avenue at Union Hall Street is a holdover of a more gracious age and was designated a city landmark in 1981. More than 110 years old, the clock has a fluted column post and is crowned by a beautiful motif.

10 The former **KURTZ STORE** at 162-24 Jamaica Avenue at Guy R. Brewer Boulevard is a superb Art Deco style building with a streamlined appearance.

GREETER'S SECRET:

The Jamaica Savings Bank was founded by former governor John Alsop King and a group of investors in 1866.



JAMAICA MARKET



UNIQUE SHOPPING

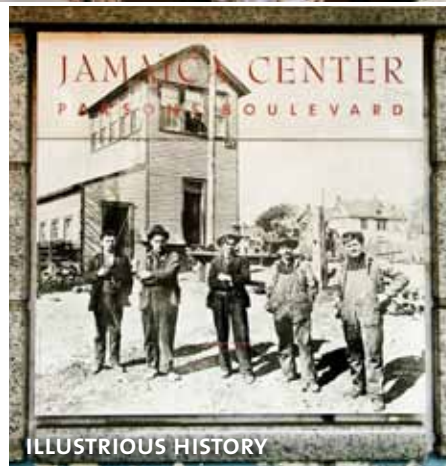
11 VALENCIA THEATRE at 165-11 Jamaica Avenue between 165th Street and Merrick Boulevard was built as a Loew's wonder theatre in 1929. Its interior creates the impression of a Spanish plaza with a star-lit ceiling and exotic decorations. No longer a theatre, the building now houses the **TABERNACLE OF PRAYER**.

Shopping

12 Jamaica Avenue is the hub of shopping in Queens. Lined with wonderful shops of every variety, you are sure to find something you need or didn't know you did need. Be sure to drop by **GERTZ PLAZA MALL** at 162-10 Jamaica Avenue at 162nd Street. Housed in the former famed department store, the mall contains shops of every variety and specialty as well as fast food restaurants.

13 JAMAICA CENTER at Jamaica Avenue and Parsons Boulevard is another spot to find something for everyone on your list. In addition to big name stores, the center also has a movie theatre.

14 JAMAICA MARKET at 90-40 160th Street at Jamaica Avenue is not only host to a wonderful farmer's market every Friday and Saturday, but houses unique shopping opportunities. This is the place to find



GREETER'S SECRET:
For your shopping pleasure, the Jamaica Center Business Improvement District has put together a wonderful map and guide to assist you in your search for the perfect outfit or gift. To learn more, see their website at <http://www.jamaicacenter.org>.

handmade jewelry and fashions as well as custom-made products and gifts.

15 THE 165TH STREET PEDESTRIAN MALL between Jamaica Avenue and 89th Avenue is a shopping mecca for the young and fashion-conscious. This is the place for jeans, tees and accessories.

When It's Time to Eat

16 MARGHARITA PIZZA at 163-04 Jamaica Avenue near 163rd Street offers old-fashioned pizza with freshly made dough in a simple setting. Nothing fancy, just good pizza.

17 JAMAICA MARKET at 90-40 160th Street at Jamaica Avenue contains a well-served food court that offers everything from Cajun to pizza to stir-fry. After you've eaten, you can wander the booths of fascinating gift items.

18 RINCON SALVADORENO RESTAURANT at 92-15 149th Street at Jamaica Avenue calls itself the oldest Salvadorian restaurant in the city. Known for its friendly service, be sure to try the papusas—an authentic Salvadorian turnovers. And don't miss the horchata—a refreshing drink flavored with cinnamon.



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Culture

19 JAMAICA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER on Jamaica Avenue at 153rd Street is housed in the former **FIRST REFORMED CHURCH** built in 1859. The building has distinctive arches and a façade in the early Romanesque Revival style. This 400-seat performance space offers theatrical productions, concerts, dance performances and film festivals. To learn more, see the website at <http://www.jamaica-performingartscenter.org>.

20 YORK COLLEGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER at 94-95 Guy R. Brewer Boulevard near Liberty Avenue is a state-of-the-art performance facility that offers a broad range of entertainment. To learn more, see the website at <http://www.york.cuny.edu/centers-institutes/performing-arts/events>.

21 In addition to being an historical treasure, **KING MANOR MUSEUM** at 150-03 Jamaica Avenue between 150th and 153rd Streets, is also a renowned venue for very special cultural events. Acting as the host to holiday concerts that reflect the period in which Rufus King and his family lived, this is a special space to enjoy the music of Haydn and Mozart. The Museum also hosts family festivals, a speaker series to pique your intellect and lectures on the history of the period. And for those who have always wanted to go on a dig, there are artifact discovery events. There is also a workshop series on crafts of the era. To learn more, see the website at <http://www.kingmanor.org>.



GREETER'S SECRET:

Jamaica is one of the most architecturally unique neighborhoods in the City boasting Colonial, Federal, Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, Free Classical and Art Deco architecture. The Greater Jamaica Development Corporation has put together a smart map of the sites and locations of interest, both commercial and architectural. To access the map, see their website at <http://www.gjdc.org>.

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 or by emailing us at information@bigapplegreeter.org

