

*Big Apple Greeter welcomes you to New York City!*



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# The Big Apple Greeter Guide to Astoria & Long Island City

**ASTORIA AND LONG ISLAND CITY ARE DISTINCTIVE NEIGHBORHOODS** that offer a culturally diverse ethnic mix, a view of industrial New York, rich historical sites and spectacular views. Geographically close to Manhattan, Astoria and Long Island City offer a respite from busy city streets and an opportunity to see something unique.

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# The Big Apple Greeter Guide to Astoria & Long Island City



RELAX AND ENJOY THE VIEWS



GANTRY PLAZA STATE PARK

## Where is Astoria and Long Island City?

Located in Northwestern Queens, Astoria and Long Island City are bordered on the south by Newtown Creek, on the north and west by the East River, and on the east by Sunnyside and Woodside.

## About Astoria and Long Island City

Settled in 1659 and named Hallet's Cove, Astoria was renamed after mogul John Jacob Astor in an effort to solicit an investment of \$2,000 in the neighborhood. Astor only made a contribution of \$500, but the name remained. Astor did maintain a summer home in Hell's Gate in Manhattan just across the East River from the neighborhood that was named in his honor. Once home to numerous factories and bakeries, Long Island City is now a venue for the filming of major motion pictures and television shows. It is also the home to some major artistic venues and luxury lofts.

## It's Easy to Get to Astoria and Long Island City

**M BY SUBWAY:** **7** train to stations at Vernon Boulevard/Jackson Avenue, Hunters Point Avenue, 45th Road/Court House Square, Queensboro Plaza and 33rd Street/Rawson Street. **E** train to

stations at 23rd Street/Ely Avenue, Queens Plaza, 36th Street and Steinway Street. **F** train to the station at 21st Street/Queensbridge. **V** trains to stations at 23rd Street/Ely Avenue, Queens Plaza, 36th Street and Steinway Street. **R** trains to stations at Queensboro Plaza, 36th Street and Steinway Street. **N** or **W** trains to stations at Queensboro Plaza, 39th Avenue, 36th Avenue, Broadway, 30th Avenue, Astoria Boulevard and Ditmars Boulevard.



**GREETER'S SECRET:** Long Island City is home to the largest fortune cookie factory in the United States. Owned by Wonton Foods, the factory produces 4 million cookies per day.

Street. Other bus lines within Queens that service Astoria and Long Island City include the **Q18, Q19, Q19A, Q102, Q103, Q104** and **B61**.

**BY WATER TAXI:** Water Taxis run from the East River and 35th Street in Manhattan to the Hunter's Point Ferry stop. To learn more, see their website at <http://www.nywatertaxi.com>.

## Things to See and Do in Astoria and Long Island City

**1 WATER TAXI BEACH** on the East River at Borden Avenue boasts 1,002 tons of sand spread over 44,000 square feet and spectacular views of the midtown Manhattan skyline. In season, the beach is fun in the sun by day and a

playground for the 21+ crowd at night. Catch some shade under the tent, play a game of beach volleyball or wiggle your toes in the sand and it is all just a 4-minute Water Taxi ride from midtown Manhattan. To learn more, see the website at [http://www.watertaxibeach.com/long\\_island\\_city](http://www.watertaxibeach.com/long_island_city).

**2 GANTRY PLAZA STATE PARK** at 50-50 Second Street and the East River has an award-winning design that has transformed former industrial space



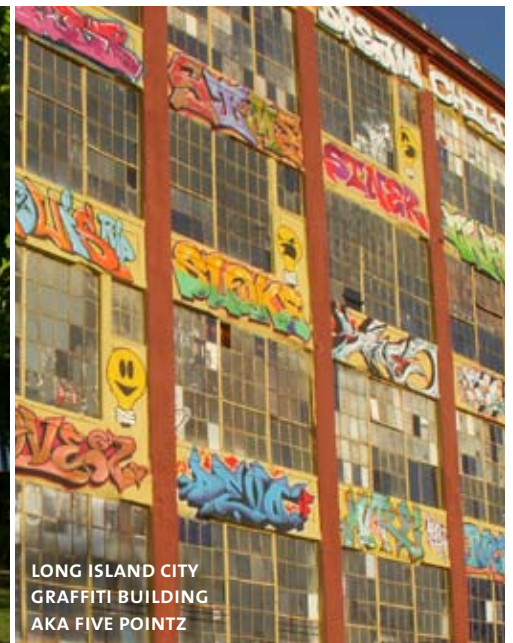
into a flourishing public park with tremendous views of Manhattan. The park follows the shoreline and is landscaped with native grasses. Curved steps lead down to a plaza and then out to four distinct piers that stretch into the East River. Wooden chaise lounges and seats offer a relaxing view of Midtown Manhattan. Two gantries, old shipping lifts, loom overhead, a reminder of the area's industrial history. Find out more at <http://nysparks.state.ny.us/parks/149/details.aspx>.



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OPEN SPACES AND SPLENDID SCENERY



LONG ISLAND CITY GRAFFITI BUILDING AKA FIVE POINTZ

**3** **SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK** at 31-34 Vernon Boulevard at Broadway and the East River is a unique outdoor exhibition space. Once an illegal dumpsite, the reclaimed area is the only place in the city dedicated to large-scale sculptures. To learn more, see the website at <http://www.socratessculpturepark.org>.

**4** **ASTORIA PARK AND POOL** at Hoyt Avenue and the East River is renowned for its swimming pool which was host to the 1936 Olympic swim trials. In addition to its beautiful pool, Astoria Park offers outdoor tennis courts, a track, a bandstand, multiple trails, basketball courts, and playgrounds that lure visitors from all over. And the views are spectacular. Sitting on the edge of the East River and resting between the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge and Hell Gate Bridge, the park offers shoreline sights and sounds that make the benches along its perimeter popular spots year-round. To learn more, see <http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/AstoriaPark>.

**GREETER'S SECRET:** Western Queens has become a magnet for the film and television industries. The Kaufman-Astoria Studios, once Paramount's east coast production facility, now act as a stage for TV shows, including Nurse Jackie and Law & Order. Also in the area is Silvercup Studios. Once a bread factory, it is now the largest film and television production facility in the city and counts among its productions Sex and the City and The Sopranos.



**5** **THE NOGUCHI MUSEUM** at 32-37 Vernon Boulevard near 10th Street was designed to preserve and display the works of Japanese-American sculptor Isamu Noguchi. The museum boasts 12 galleries and an outdoor sculpture garden. For hours and exhibit information, see <http://www.noguchi.org>.

**6** **THE MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE** at 35th Avenue at 37th Street is a treasure of film history with interactive displays. Hands-on activities and classic film screenings are available. For hours and activities, see <http://www.movingimage.us/site/site.php>.

**7** **SCULPTURECENTER** at 44-19 Purves Street near Jackson Avenue is dedicated to experimental and innovative developments in contemporary

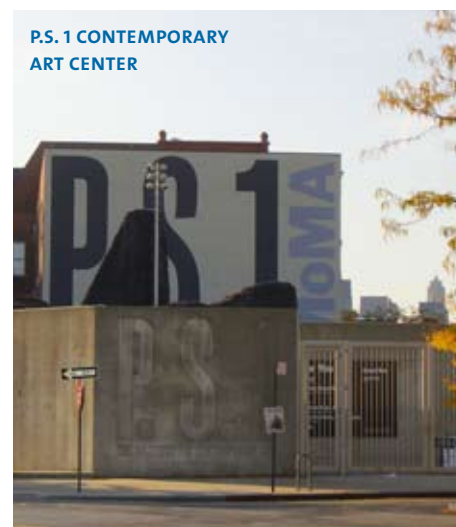
sculpture. SculptureCenter commissions new work and presents exhibits by emerging and established, national and international artists. For hours and exhibits, see <http://sculpture-center.org>.

**8** **P.S.1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER** at 22-25 Jackson Ave at 46th Avenue is one of the oldest and largest non-profit contemporary art institutions in the United States. An exhibition space rather than a collecting institution, P.S.1 devotes its energy and resources to displaying the most experimental art in the world. For hours and exhibits, see <http://ps1.org>. Make sure to check out the graffiti on the building across the street at 22-42 Jackson Avenue.

## Shopping

**9** **SLOVAK-CZECH VARIETIES** at 10-59 Jackson Avenue near Vernon Boulevard carries gift items originating in Slovakia and the Czech Republic running the gamut from Prague glassware to food and Czech and Slovak folk music. Walls are stocked high with puzzles, marionettes and wooden toys that make great gifts.

**10** **TITAN FOODS** at 25-56 31st Street at Astoria Boulevard claims to be the largest Greek market in the United States. Offering a wide variety of olives and feta cheeses, make sure to check out their bakery for a selection of wonderful baked goods and their prepared dishes.





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DRINK IN THE ATMOSPHERE WHILE DINING OUTDOORS

SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN LITTLE CAIRO

**11** **STEINWAY STREET** is the main shopping area in Astoria and is perfect for a leisurely stroll among high fashion boutiques interspersed with one-of-a-kind shops. The section between Astoria Boulevard and 27th Avenue is known as **“LITTLE CAIRO”** and is home to Arab coffee shops and restaurants.

## When It's Time to Eat

**12** **CAFÉ HENRI** at 10-10 50th Avenue near Vernon Boulevard is known for its lovely weekend brunches, authentic French cuisine and rich desserts. Live jazz is offered on Thursday and Saturday nights.

**13** **SHI** at 4720 Center Boulevard near 47th Road is an Asian fusion restaurant that offers fine dining, skyline views, white wooden swings on the patio and dancing on weekends.

**14** **AGNANTI RESTAURANT** at 19-06 Ditmars Boulevard at 19th Street is conveniently located across the street from Astoria Park. Offering outdoor seating, traditional Greek cuisine and wines, diners feel like they are on the Aegean.

**GREETER'S SECRET:** A little off the beaten path, but well worth the trip is Bohemian Hall and Park at 29-19 24th Avenue near 29th Street in Astoria. Built in 1908, this is the last surviving Beer Garden in the city. To learn more, visit the website at [http://www.bohemianhall.com/main\\_body.htm](http://www.bohemianhall.com/main_body.htm).

**15** **BISTRO 33** at 19-33 Ditmars Boulevard near 19th Street offers fusion French/Japanese cuisine with separate brunch and sushi menus.

**16** **SAGE GENERAL STORE** at 24-20 Jackson Avenue between 45th Road and 45th Avenue serves breakfast and lunch in an old-fashioned country store setting. The focus is on homemade American regional cuisine, artisanal food products from across the country and use of local products from local farmers.

**GREETER'S SECRET:** Astoria is home to Steinway and Sons, the factory that produces the piano revered by concert pianists worldwide.

## Culture

**17** **THE GREATER ASTORIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY** at 35-20 Broadway near 35th

Street offers events for those interested in the history of Astoria and Long Island City. Past events have included: tours of the famous Lent-Riker-Smith house, a 1654 Dutch farmhouse and the oldest private residence in the city; a gastronomic tour of Astoria; as well as lectures, exhibits, and bicycle tours. For a list of current offerings, see their website at <http://www.astorialic.org>.

**18** **THE ASTORIA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER** at 34-23 Steinway Street is a professional theatre company with dedicated community outreach efforts. The center brings high quality theatre and entertainment to Astoria/Long Island City and supports local youth

and senior citizens. To learn about current productions and their venues, see the website at <http://www.apacny.org/current-show.htm>.

### 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)





# Long Island City

