

# THE BEST OF QUEENS

Astoria, Flushing, Jackson Heights, Long Island City — Queens is an ever-more-approachable collection of cultural clusters. Experience authentic tastes, arts and goods from India, Greece, Asia and more with NYC-based USA TODAY Travel editor **Ashley Day**.



## SHOPPING

### 1 NEW WORLD MALL

This mall in downtown Flushing is a day-trip destination in itself. The food court is a smorgasbord of dim sum, dumplings and noodles; there's karaoke on the third floor; and the supermarket imports authentic Asian wares. • 136-20 Roosevelt Ave. • 718-353-0551 • [newworldmallny.com](http://newworldmallny.com)

### 2 INSTANT REPLAY

Forest Hills' Austin Street is lined with kitschy and exotic boutiques, including this vintage-meets-discount designer shop with marked-down handbags and an array of jewelry. Explore the eclectic collection packed inside the unmarked spot for surprise finds. • 7220 Austin St. • 718-544-3556

### 3 JACKSON HEIGHTS GREENMARKET ▼

The borough's largest farmers market hosts more than a dozen local vendors every Sunday, year-round. Right on the edge of Travers Park, it's a family destination with live music, cooking demos, recipe exchanges and community events. • 34th Avenue at 78th Street • 212-788-7476 • [grownyc.org](http://grownyc.org)



CHRISTOPHE TEDJASUKMANA

## RESTAURANTS

### 1 WHITE BEAR

You can't miss dumplings in Flushing (the Chinatown of Queens) and White Bear is a local favorite. The wontons with chili oil draw New Yorkers from near and far, putting the humble hole-in-the-wall on the map. Dumpling connoisseurs can find tours or crawls, all likely to make a stop here.

• 135-02 Roosevelt Ave. • 718-961-2322

### 2 TAVERNA KYCLADES ▼

Astoria is a largely Greek neighborhood, and Taverna Kyclades offers a quintessential taste of the culture from lamb, seafood or a trademark Greek salad on the menu printed in Greek first, English second.

• 33-07 Ditmars Blvd. • 718-545-8666



TAVERNA KYCLADES

### 3 JACKSON DINER

Conclude your globetrotting in Jackson Heights' Little India. Jackson Diner is a local landmark with more than 30 years in business. Count on authentic tandoori fare with chicken and curry favorites such as chicken tikka and vindaloo. Or check out the daily lunch buffet for variety with value, desserts included. • 37-47 74th St. • 718-672-1232 • [jacksondiner.com](http://jacksondiner.com)

## NIGHTLIFE

### 1 BOHEMIAN HALL AND BEER GARDEN ▼

New York City's oldest beer garden (c. 1910) is the cash cow for Astoria's Czech and Slovak Cultural Center. Brews from around the world (including New York) and traditional Czech eats support cultural programs for area kids. Locals love the 800-seat garden in the summer or when sports are on TV, and cultural events are held year-round.

• 29-19 24th Ave. • 718-274-4925 • [bohemianhall.com](http://bohemianhall.com)



BOHEMIAN HALL

### 2 SWEET AFTON

From the barkeepers behind Wilfie & Nell, The Wren and other Manhattan favorites is Sweet Afton, a neighborhood bar with comfort food to boot. Go for live music on Mondays and stay late — it's open until 4 a.m. daily. The fare is sourced locally (from Murray's Cheese to Pat LaFrieda Meat Purveyors) and craft cocktails are the main attraction.

• 30-09 34th St. • 718-777-2570 • [sweetaftonbar.com](http://sweetaftonbar.com)

### 3 DUTCH KILLS BAR

There's debate over whether this bar is a bona fide speakeasy, but the candlelit hot spot has an air of intimacy. The cheaper Queens-themed drinks are the hit of the weeknight happy hour. • 27-24 Jackson Ave. • 718-383-2724 • [dutchkillsbar.com](http://dutchkillsbar.com)

## ATTRACTIONS

### 1 MOMA PSI

Exclusively showcasing contemporary art, this exhibition space is ever-changing with new, groundbreaking design. Take in installations, performances and ideas in Long Island City Thursday through Monday. Admission is donation-based, and children up to age 16 are free. • 22-25 Jackson Ave. • 718-784-2084 • [momapsi.org](http://momapsi.org)

### 2 QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN

The collection of close to 30 gardens, spread over 39 acres of Flushing Meadows, has free admission November through March. Look for events year-round, namely concerts through the summer and an international beer festival in July. • 43-50 Main St. • 718-886-3800 • [queensbotanical.org](http://queensbotanical.org)



STEPHEN LOVEKIN/GETTY IMAGES

### 3 MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE ▲

Explore the history of film and TV, plus modern exhibits and regular screenings. The museum in Astoria offers interactive activities for families and frequent events. Admission is free on Friday nights. • 36-01 35th Ave. • 718-777-6888 • [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)

## HIDDEN GEMS

### 1 HIMALAYAN HEIGHTS

Jackson Heights' 74th Street neighborhood is increasingly a hub for expats from Nepal and Tibet. Experience the food and customs they brought with them at Himalayan Yak, Patel Brothers and Payul. Momo beef dumplings are a must-try. • 74th Street between Roosevelt and 37th avenues

### 2 THALIA HISPANIC THEATRE

Queens' only bilingual Hispanic theater, located in Sunnyside, features plays, music and dance in Spanish and English. The programs support Spanish, Latin American and American artists, from composers to dancers to playwrights. Catch the musical *Colombia* in December and the Calpulli Mexican Dance Company in the spring. • 41-17 Greenpoint Ave. • 718-729-3880 • [thaliatheatre.org](http://thaliatheatre.org)

### 3 SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK ▼

Five acres atop a landfill are used to display local artists' works. Have a picnic on the water with a view of Manhattan or browse current exhibits. • 32-01 Vernon Blvd. • 718-956-1819 • [socratesculpturepark.org](http://socratesculpturepark.org)



NATE DORR