

Jetset Journals

no.1

2025

# NEW YORK

7 Days

Christmas Special

A wide-angle photograph of a mountain range at sunset. The sky is a gradient of warm colors, from deep orange to soft blue. The mountains in the background are silhouetted against the bright sky, while the foreground is in deep shadow, creating a sense of depth and atmosphere.

a travel guide

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# INTRO

New York City—the city that never sleeps, known for its skyscrapers, vibrancy, and good food—is an ideal destination for a city break.

If you're traveling from Europe, you should plan to stay for at least a week, and even that may not be enough time to see all the highlights, especially if it's your first trip to New York.

The global metropolis is served by several European airports, and the flight time is approximately 6-8 hours. The city has three airports, and from all of them you can reach Manhattan in about an hour by subway or Uber. Depending on your accommodation, the Uber shuttle may also be an option.

The metro is a great way to get around the city, and you can pay conveniently with Apple Pay. The limit is \$34 for a period of 7 days, after which you can travel for free.

You'll quickly notice that you will also go by foot a lot.

A trip to NYC is worthwhile at any time of year, but the pre-Christmas period in December is particularly magical.

I'll go into more detail about the special highlights of this time of year in this guide.

In addition to countless sightseeing attractions, the city is characterized by its unique vibe and numerous excellent restaurants and cafés.

# HIGHLIGHTS



**01.**

## Rockefeller Christmas Tree

THE highlight of the pre-Christmas season, which many associate with the city, is the huge Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center. The tree is decorated with approximately 50,000 LED lights on an 8 km long wire, and a 400 kg Swarovski crystal star adorns the top. The lights shine daily from 5 a.m. to midnight starting on Thanksgiving, and the area becomes incredibly crowded, especially in the evening.



**02.**

## Central Park

Central Park is worth a visit at any time of year, but of course also in winter. The atmosphere is particularly romantic when there is snow on the ground. But even when there isn't, you can take a ride in a horse-drawn carriage decorated for Christmas or go ice skating at Wollman Rink with New York's skyline in the background.



**03.**

## Dyker Heights

If you're not yet fully in the Christmas spirit, you will be after visiting Dyker Heights in Brooklyn. Here, the residents have taken the concept of decoration to a whole new level. The houses between 11th and 13th Avenue and 83rd and 86th Street are particularly well decorated. There are also several stands selling snacks and drinks, and you can get here by train or Uber.



## 04.

### **Macy's**

The huge department store on Herald Square shines in Christmas splendor in December, from the facade to the aisles inside and Santaland on the 8th floor.

## 05.

### **Upper East Side**

Some neighborhoods are particularly beautifully decorated during the pre-Christmas period, especially the beautiful townhouses on the Upper East Side, but also in West Village and Little Italy, for example, where the cafés and restaurants are decorated especially festively.

## 06.

### **Wall Street Tree**

In addition to the most famous Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center, there are other trees worth seeing throughout the city, including on Wall Street, in Washington Square Park, at the NY Public Library, in Bryant Park, at the MET Museum and at the Seaport.

## 07.

### **Grand Central Station**

The facade of Grand Central Station and the main concourse are also festively decorated in December, and there is also a small Christmas market and the Holiday Train Show.



## 08.

### Bryant Park

Another absolute highlight is Bryant Park Winter Village.

Here, too, there is an ice rink and a small Christmas market in the heart of Manhattan. The hot chocolate from "No Chewing Allowed" is particularly recommended, but there is also a wide selection for those who are a little hungry.



## 09.

### Radio City Rockettes

A Broadway show is always a highlight in NYC, and during the holiday season, the Christmas spectacle at Radio Music City Hall is extra special. You can get tickets online or buy discounted tickets at the TKTS booth in Lincoln Center/Times Square for the same or next day.



## 10.

### Christmas Markets

The most famous and, in my opinion, most beautiful Christmas market is the one at Bryant Park, but there are also other Christmas markets, for example at Columbus Circle, Union Square, and the Herald Holiday Market in front of Macy's department store.



# DAY TO DAY

**Day 1** – After arriving, the first thing to do is get to your accommodation. To do this, take either the metro or an Uber (shuttle) from the respective airport.

Depending on where you have chosen to stay and when you arrive, you can grab something for dinner and stroll through the surrounding streets. If you are staying in *Midtown*, you could grab a slice or two of pizza from *Lucia Pizza of SoHo* and take a stroll through the surrounding streets.

**Day 2** – The first stop of the coming day is a bagel from *Apollo Bagels*. If you decide to go to Apollo in *West Village*, you can grab a coffee from *Do Not Feed*

*Alligators* and walk to *Washington Square Park*. If the weather is good, continue on to *Central Park*, where you can take a *carriage ride* through the park or go *ice skating* at *Wollman Rink*. In the afternoon, grab a *hot chocolate* and a snack at *Bryant Park Winter Village*. You can also go *ice skating* here. End the day with dinner—for example, *vodka pasta* at *Dante NYC*.

**Day 3** – The next day, head to *Smør Bakery* in *East Village* for breakfast. Grab a coffee around the corner at *La Cabra*. Then drive downtown, stroll past *One World Trade Center*, and visit the *Christmas*

*Tree at Wall Street*. If you feel like it, you can either take the *Staten Island Ferry* past the *Statue of Liberty* or go on a tour to the statue. Back in downtown, grab a lunch snack at *Los Tacos No. 1* and then walk across the *Brooklyn Bridge* at sunset. Once you arrive here in Brooklyn, you can warm up with another coffee at *% Arabica* before heading to *Dyker Heights* in the early evening and strolling through the decorated streets. Back in Manhattan, enjoy a burger from *Gotham Burger Social Club* in the evening.

**Day 4** – On the fourth day, you'll have another bagel for breakfast, this time from *Leon's Bagels*. Then you'll head to *Grand Central Station*, which is decorated for Christmas, and grab a coffee from *Black Fox Coffee* just around the corner.

At lunchtime, you can stroll through the streets of *SoHo* and browse in a few shops. For a snack, grab a cookie at *Levain Bakery*. If the weather is good, enjoy the sunset from one of the observation decks, such as the *Top of the Rock*. If you decide to go to the Top of the Rock, you can then marvel at the large *Christmas tree* at *Rockefeller Center*.

If you want to enjoy dinner in a particularly festive atmosphere, you can reserve a table at *Rolf's*, a German restaurant.

**Day 5** – On day 5, you can pick up your breakfast bagel in the north at *Broad Nosh Bagels* on *Columbus Circle*.

*Lincoln Center* is also nearby, where discounted tickets for Broadway shows or, in winter, for the Christmas spectacle at *Radio City Music Hall* are available daily at the *TKTS booth*. Once you've got your ticket, walk across *Central Park* to the *Upper East Side*. Here, too, there are houses decorated for Christmas, and for lunch, you can get the best hot dog from a small stand in front of the *Mark Hotel*.

After spending the afternoon here at the *MET Museum*, we head to the show at *Radio Music City Hall* in the evening.

For dinner, you'll have a burger from *Smashy Burger* afterwards.

**Day 6** – If you fancy a different breakfast the next day—e.g., filled croissants—you can pick something up at *Super Moon Bakehouse*.

Depending on the weather, you can then either visit a museum, such as the *9/11 Museum*, or take a stroll along the *High Line*. You can grab a midday snack at *Chelsea Market* or a *7th Street Burger* joint. In the late afternoon, when it starts to get dark, go window shopping on *Fifth Avenue* and head to *Times Square* in the evening. Here you can leave a wish for the new year on the *Wish Wall* and then have dinner at *L'industrie Pizza*.

**Day 7** – Depending on your departure time, there may still be time for a breakfast bagel from *Russ & Daughters* or lunch at *Katz's* before heading to the *airport* and returning home.

# WHERE TO EAT

## Restaurants:

- **Katz's Delicatessen**  
Awesome Pastrami Sandwiches
- **Gotham Burger Social Club**  
For me the best Burger, in East Village
- ★ **Scarr's Pizza**  
Very good Pizza, in Chinatown



## To-Go:

- **Burger**  
7th Street Burger, Smashy Burger,  
Skinny Louie or Shake Shack,
- **Pizza**  
L'industrie, Lucia Pizza of SoHo,  
Manero's or Joe's Pizza
- **Bagel**  
Apollo Bagels, Russ & Daughters, Broad  
Nosh, Leon's or Pop Up Bagels
- **Cookies**  
Levain Bakery (!) or Culture Espresso



## Coffee Shops:

- ★ **Black Fox Coffee**
- **La Cabra**
- **Birch Coffee**
- **Fellini Coffee**
- **Rhythm Zero**
- **Simpl Coffee**
- **Do Not Feed Alligators**

## Breakfast Spots:

- **Smør Bakery**  
favorite spot, Cardamom-Buns (!)
- **Two Hands**  
great Avocado bread
- **Hole in the Wall**  
delicious Bowls
- **Super Moon Bakehouse**  
filled Croissants & more

# WHERE TO SLEEP

There is a wide variety of hotels and Airbnbs in NYC. The question here is rather whether they are affordable. Airbnbs are usually small rooms with locals – here you can also consider Brooklyn, Williamsburg, or New Jersey. Just make sure you stay close to the subway so you have good connections to Manhattan, as you'll be spending most of your time in the city center. We've tried a few hotels that we've always been happy with, which are located in Manhattan and are in the mid-price range for NYC, such as the following:

**Four Points by Sheraton Downtown NYC** – good location in Downtown.  
**Cloud One Hotel NY Downtown** – also great location in Downtown.  
**Hilton Garden Inn Tribeca** – Rooms okay, but directly next to Metro.  
**Hugo Hotel** – A few minutes' walk from the metro, but with a lovely roof terrace/bar.

**Thanks for reading! You can find more details on  
my website or Instagram & TikTok!**



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