

METRO travel escapes



LISTEN

Outdoor Cinema, various (www.nycgo.com)

There is something quite magical about watching a film outdoors on a massive screen with the glittering city lights surrounding you. 'Summer in New York is a paradise for the stingy cinephile,' says Reginald Charlot at NYC & Company. 'The warmer months bring free outdoor screenings of huge hits and cult classics shown in some of the city's most striking settings.' Settings include the foot of the Brooklyn Bridge, a 30ft-high plaza in the thick of the Lower Manhattan skyline and even the deck of an aircraft carrier.

EXPERIENCE

Urban Garden @ Brooklyn Botanic Garden (www.nycgo.com)

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden constitutes 52 verdant acres located in the heart of Brooklyn's cultural district and is an idyllic retreat renowned for its iconic Japanese Hill and Pond Garden as well as thousands of different species of rose. At Urban Garden, an exhibition running until September, green-fingered visitors will have the opportunity to pick up loads of handy tips on how to tend a better city garden from the Garden's own horticultural experts, who will also showcase edible plants, container gardening and various methods for growing fruit and veg on your terrace or rooftop.

Summer in the city that never sleeps

THE city that never sleeps means something different to everyone but it's during summer when the five boroughs really come alive. New York City's skyline, an instantly recognisable mosaic of skyscrapers, bridges, waterways and islands, lends a bit of perspective to the glorious chaos of its streets and is best viewed from the 86th floor of the soaring art deco Empire State Building. The easily navigable streets, meanwhile, are an

energetic blend of styles, cultures and some seriously cool clothing.

Those seeking world-class culture will find it on Manhattan's Museum Mile and those seeking solace will find it in Central Park, one of the world's greatest urban oases, spanning 843 acres of rolling fields and walking trails. And the cool kids? You'll find them in Brooklyn, of course.

Polly Humphris
travel@ukmetro.co.uk

GO GREEN

Greenhouse, 150 Varick St
(www.greenhouseusa.com)

We knew that food, energy sources and even clothing could be green but clubbing? Yep, New York City has opened its first eco-friendly nightclub and, better still, even the booze is organic, which means it must be good for you, right?

'This SoHo space is made mostly from recycled materials and boasts a huge waterfall, low-voltage lights, water-efficient toilets and a ceiling made entirely of live plants,' says Charlot. 'You can feel good about your consumption as you sip organic alcohol made with fresh juice.'

LEARN

Pizza a Casa Pizza School, 371 Grand St
(www.pizzaschool.com)

Pizza a Casa is run by Mark Bello, a tour de force of creativity and energy whose love for pizza knows no bounds. Bello, whose pizzas have been credited as some of the best in New York by the Village Voice, has spent over a decade refining his recipe. At his evening workshops students are privy to all of his doughy knowledge, from how to make the consummate crust to the ideal ratio of toppings to cheese.

GETTING THERE: From London Heathrow: American Airlines (Tel: 0844 499 7300; www.americanairlines.co.uk; from £787.39 one-way/non-stop)

GET FIT

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, 405 W 55th St
(www.alvinailey.org)

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is a fun and healthy way to lend some support to your waistband, which will inevitably expand thanks to the US's supersize portions. Drop-in classes cost \$17 and cover all manner of techniques from the Masala Bhangra Workout, a brilliant cross between Bollywood and dance aerobics, to Theater Dance, which is all Broadway fabulousness and jazz-hands.





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