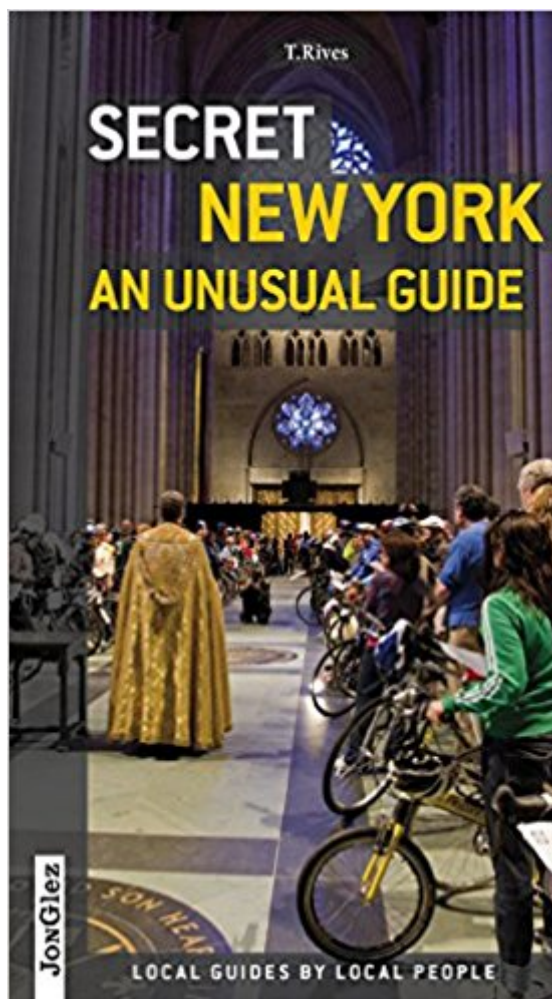


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Secret New York - An Unusual Guide: Local Guides By Local People



Synopsis

Discover Secret Gardens, decipher ancient riddles on tombstones, visit a disturbed Indian burial ground, observe the stars and planets through a university telescope, frown at a bronze statue of Lenin, harvest mastodon food in Central Park, enjoy the aroma of a roomful of dirt, find a Venetian palazzo above a former stable, spot the forbidden island that was once declared a sovereign nation by a guy in a rowboat, track down a townhouse concealing a subway tunnel, walk under the canopy of the primeval forest, read a memorial plaque to an event that happened in another dimension, fall into a trance before a piece of subway art that flickers and moves, have your bicycle blessed in church. New York offers endless opportunity to step off the program and peer into the city's fascinating past and present. Secret New York - An Unusual Guide is an indispensable resource for those who thought they already knew everything about America's metropolis, or want to begin exploring its hidden places.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The title is apt - this is truly an unusual guide. It contains a wealth of information about unusual or relatively unknown sites in the great metropolis that is New York City. Undeniably, here are some places which this reviewer did already know; but more importantly, here are vast numbers of places which were totally unknown to him. It is a wee bit Manhattan-centric; but then, so are most guidebooks. The book should be required reading for those who want to see New York properly, and really understand what the City is all about (along with many other books!). The book is

arranged so that each odd-numbered page has the text about the site, while the preceding even-numbered page has a color picture. Many of the places are hard-to-notice details in an otherwise well-known building, museum or statue. Invariably there will be places which hold little interest for some - the "Kymaerica Plaque" in the East Village, which "commemorates" an "event" which "occurred" in "another dimension," is hardly a must-see site for people with an interest in history, architecture, art, religions, sociology, anthropology, or other conventional obsessions! In fact, this "plaque" itself as much "in another dimension" as the event that it "commemorates" - even the very building, in whose stairwell it allegedly is located, is nonexistent, as there is no 83 Avenue A (81 and 85 are next-door neighbors). But a reader who overlooks this nonsensical mumbo-jumbo will find a huge number of fascinating entries, many of which, at least with this reviewer, provoked constant trips to the computer to check things on the Internet. Even so, in a city like New York, there are definitely lots more places to cover! The one gripe for this reviewer is on page 411. As a proud Jew, this reviewer feels offended by the condescending remarks about the Jewish religion's rules for Shabbos (the Sabbath); this is especially since the book contains no condescending remarks about Christianity, Hinduism or even Islam, all of which have places of worship referenced. The eruv, a symbolic fence that allows religiously observant Jews to carry objects outside their private home on Shabbos, is totally unobtrusive and unnoticeable even to those who search for it. The text implies that non-Jews are annoyed by this, when, in fact, apart from anti-Semites, the only ones who are annoyed are some anti-religious Jews, who often incite the anti-Semites against the Jews. This entry should be deleted in the next edition, because the eruv is totally lacking in interest and can virtually not even be seen. Mind you, this is not an accusation of anti-Semitism; the book references three other Jewish sites - the Kehila Kedosha Jenina Synagogue in the Lower East Side (page 75), the old Shearith Israel Cemetery in Lower Manhattan (page 85) and 770 Eastern Parkway (the world headquarters of Chabad/Lubavitch Hassidim) in Brooklyn's Crown Heights (page 407) - with no complaints from this reviewer. Despite this glitch, this book is absolutely essential for those who desire to see New York better than just the standard tourist sites.

This book is for the locals and residents, definitely not a typical tourist trap book. I read the book in two days and am steadily knocking out the sites and learning more and more about my city that I never knew before

I bought this for my niece who is traveling to NYC with us for the first time this year. She has been looking in this book and marking off a ton of things she had never heard of and making a wish list of

everything she wants to see. I love all the texts and phone calls and hearing her excitement. A great book for first-timers and for those of us who have visited the city.

Great 'can you find it?' book, used while taking my cousin around NYC and some of these were really hard to find = I would never have noticed them, or appreciated their history.

My friend is an avid explorer and travels extensively for work. Her new office is in New York so I bought this book for "little adventures" when she has to stay close to home. I read through it before wrapping it up. What a wonderful find! The destinations collected in this book are not your average tour-guide ones. I wanted something slightly different and this is it! For example, there is a room you can visit that is simply a room full of dirt. Yep. I can't remember all the details - it is an artist's exhibit and I would love to go there myself 'just because'. If you are looking for New York guide books I highly recommend adding this one to the choices, or for a housewarming gift for someone new to the area.

Bought this as a present for people who visit NY regularly. Because they've been there enough times, they generally don't need advice on where to go or what to do. However, after looking at the book they were excited to go do some of the less known about tourist things. Great book for someone that is looking for things to do beyond time square, the Statue of Liberty, etc.

I know NYC well, including the boroughs. There were a few things I did not know in this book, but most were not new to me. Got it as a gift for a friend who just moved to NYC. Some of the stuff only locals and those who specialize in a certain hobby would know, so this is perfect for them to feel like a NYC pro after a few months.

Overall, a really nice glimpse into so many interesting places New York. The plus is that many of them are obscure. The minus is that many, many of them are nothing more than a plaque, or a window.

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