



GRAMERCY

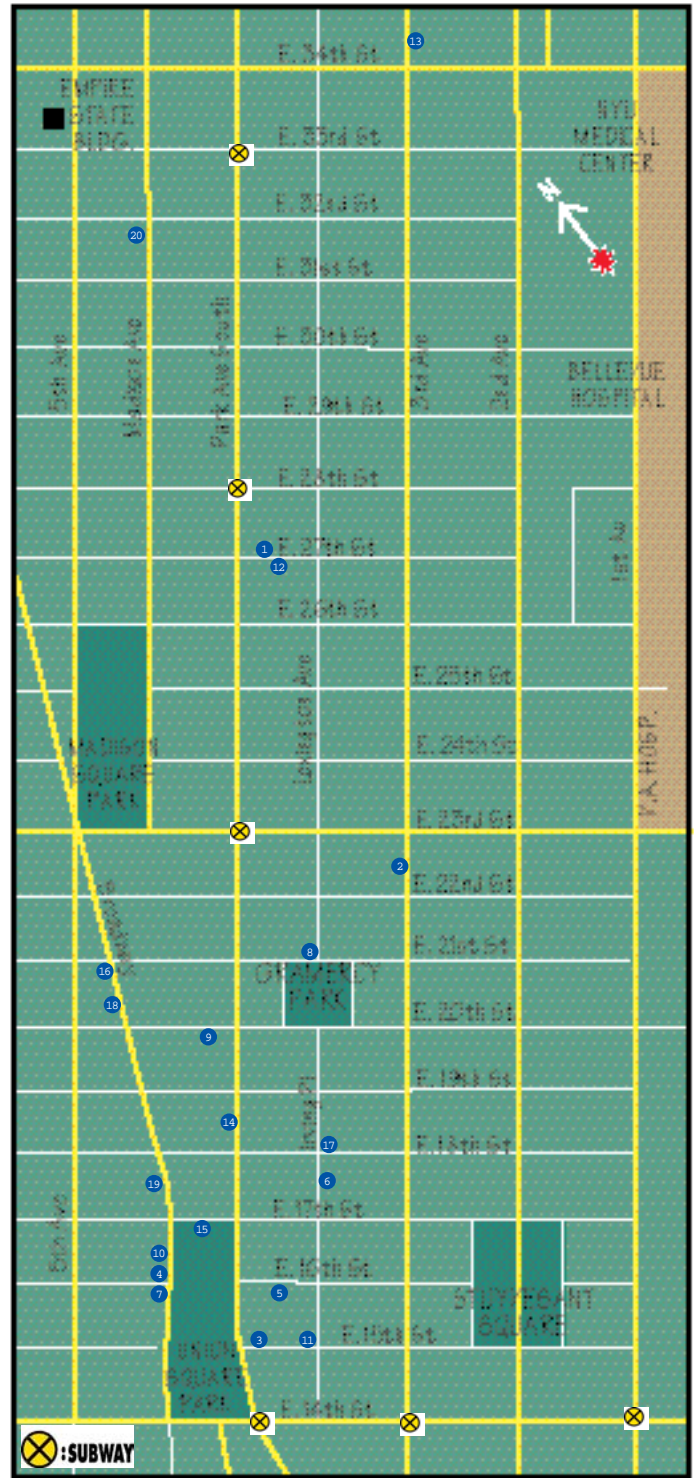


In the sidewalk cafes, swanky bars and upscale restaurants, downtown meets uptown as in no other neighborhood in the city.

At the center of this cultural commotion is Union Square. Stand on the corner of 16th Street and Park Avenue South and cast your eyes uptown. Then cross through the park and stand on Broadway and 14th Street and look downtown. Here the sharply contradicting cultural viewpoints of two separate worlds rush headlong towards each other at breakneck speed, colliding head-on right before your eyes every night.

During the 70s, like many downtown neighborhoods, Gramercy fell victim to a drug-fueled decline. The playground of upper-crust society at one time, the battleground for political and artistic radicalism at another, Gramercy has come a long way and reemerged with a new identity. This sea of excitement and emotion has produced one of the most unique and enjoyable nightlife experiences in the city.

Maybe it's the communal spirit spilling over from the open-air market in Union Square, or it could be the experimental theater venues and live music haunts that line its streets. For a blended sampling of uptown and downtown, there's no better neighborhood in the entire city.



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Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
M-F 5pm-4am
Sa-Su 7pm-4am
Drink Prices
Moderate
Food
Eclectic
Nearest Subway
6 to 28th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Aubette

119 East 27th Street
Between Park & Lexington
212.686.5500

Aubette stands out in the otherwise lackluster neighborhood of Kips Bay, and it's not just because of the decor. Evoking an 'industrial meets 50s modernist' aesthetic, with its leather couches, silver metal chairs and tables, functioning fireplace and cozy cigar room in the back, Aubette is worth a visit for visual appeal alone. With its food menu available till closing, 22 different wines by the glass, 37 single malt scotch varieties, 11 different champagnes — Aubette is perfect date material. But if you're looking for a night out with the boys (or girls), stay away. Dress suitably — i.e., New York chic.

Bahi

274 3rd Avenue
Between 21st & 22nd Streets
212.254.5466

Riding on the crest of the South Asian culture wave that has swept New York, Bahi is an Indian-themed hotspot. Okay, it'd be nice to see more Hindu hotties and mackadocious Muslims, but you can't always get what you want. There's still plenty of cuteness to scoop on. On a busy night the standard crowd clogs the front room, happily leaving the back rooms open for lounging, socializing, and minor booty shaking. But check this out — there's a little room tucked away deep in the back. Painted black and filled with leather beanbags, it's the absolutely perfect place for doing any number of things.

Belmont Lounge

117 East 15th Street
Between Irving Place & Union Square East
212.533.0009

What do you say about a place where Mariah Carey has her birthday party? Or when Robert De Niro and Helena Christensen pop in? Belmont Lounge is très cool — with its dimly lit booths at the back, separated by thin curtains, or its outdoor seating area — and people flock here like crazy. A lot of NYU students hang here, but you'll also spot the occasional celebrity and other glamorous and wannabe glams cruising the shabby chic surroundings. Every other month they feature a different artist on the walls, so if you want art and music in a hip and cool surrounding, come on down.

Type of Establishment
Restaurant/Lounge
Hours
Daily 4pm-4am
Drink Prices
Inexpensive
Food
American

Blue Water Grill

31 Union Square West @ 16th Street
212.675.9500

Indulge in the grandiose of this 100-year-old New York landmark with marble walls and stucco ceilings as lofty and beautiful as the sky. An upscale but unpretentious mixed crowd gathers here after work for a drink or dinner, turning the place into a bustling, high-energy spot. The huge space is smartly divided into a central bar, several dining areas, a raw bar, and, best of all, an elevated terrace that allows you to watch Union Square's uptown-meets-downtown scene. A hip, up-tempo mood prevails in the downstairs dining room featuring a small cigar bar and live jazz six nights a week.

Candela

116 East 16th Street
Between Irving Place & Park Avenue South
212.254.1600

Candela is a classy restaurant and bar with more than a little attention paid to decor. Does 'upscale meets goth' sound campy to you? It's not, even though there are candles everywhere. Pyrophobes shouldn't be afraid, either, because the drink menu offers plenty to calm the nerves. If you can get over the idea of drinking a margarita in sort of a postmodern Dracula's loft apartment, you'll be treated to one of the city's best. The tequila martinis aren't too shabby either. Drinks are priced high, so prepare to see some of your money go up in smoke. Then again, you could always put the tab on your corporate card.

Cibar (Inn at Irving Place)

56 Irving Place
Between 17th & 18th Streets
212.460.5656

Cibar is suited to its lovely locale: idyllic Irving Place and its cozy interior. Unlike most other cigar bars, this one actually looks, and is, female friendly. Whether it's the upholstered couches or the intimate feel, a lot of women seem to agree: the crowd on any given night is evenly split across gender lines. Choose from an extensive list of single malt scotches and martinis, stroll out to the small outdoor space (front and back), and enjoy the evening. The feel? Upper East Side bankers venture downtown.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
M-Th 11:30am-0am
-
12:30am
F-Sa 11:30am-1am
Drink Prices
Moderate
Food
Seafood
Nearest Subway
4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
Credit Cards
AmEx, V, MC

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 5:30pm-11pm
Drink Prices
Expensive
Food
Modern American
Nearest Subway
4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
Credit Cards
AmEx, V, MC, Diners

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
F-Sa 5pm-4am
M-Th 5pm-2am
Drink Prices
Expensive
Food
N/A
Nearest

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant
 Hours Su-M 7am-2am T-Sa 7am-6am
 Drink Prices Moderate
 Food American/Brazilian
 Nearest Subway 4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
 Credit Cards AmEx, V, MC

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant
 Hours Daily 10am-12am
 Drink Prices Moderate
 Food American
 Nearest Subway 6 to 23rd Street
 Credit Cards All Major

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant
 Hours F-Sa 12pm-12am Su-Th 12pm-11pm
 Drink Prices Moderate
 Food Fine American
 Nearest Subway 4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
 Credit Cards AmEx, V, MC

Coffee Shop
 29 Union Square West @ 16th Street
 212.243.7969

Don't let its classic American diner look fool you, there's nothing down home about this celebrity hangout. Notorious for hiring only those who look like they've sauntered down a catwalk in Paris, it's painfully obvious that if you don't look mahvelous darling, you need not apply. Long-legged vixens and well-sculpted studs serve up Brazilian cuisine (entrees \$10-\$15). The juice bar features exotic health drinks that promise to make you strong and sexy, but wouldn't you rather be stuffing yourself silly with the Shop's famous banana cream pie?

Gramercy Park Hotel
 2 Lexington Avenue @ 21st Street
 212.475.4320

This warm, old-world bar is a 'must see' for anyone in New York. First of all, it's in a great location in that cozy and beautiful square called Gramercy Park. Second, it's the perfect place for a *tete-à-tete* with a date, friend, colleague, etc. Third, the drinks are good, which shouldn't be taken for granted in New York. Although you may not normally think to go to a hotel bar, this one is worth the visit.

Gramercy Tavern
 42 East 20th Street
 Between Broadway & Park Avenue South
 212.477.0777

The bar at Gramercy Tavern is perfect for cocktailing. Swanky and upscale (both the space and the crowd), the bar features an older, jacket and tie set. On the weekends, it still favors an older crowd, but instead of suits, you'll find blazers and shorter skirts. A very good date bar or even a good place to meet up as a very small group. Drinks are on the pricier side, but that's in keeping with the upscale ambiance, and you can actually converse without shouting.

Heartland Brewery
 35 Union Square West
 Between 16th & 17th Streets
 212.645.3400

Heartland Brewery has the rare combination of a friendly atmosphere, attentive waitstaff, and great food and drink. Even non-beer drinkers will enjoy their homemade brew — a tasting menu offers the best value for the money. All the beers are delicious, and they make a mean buffalo burger. The space is long, with full seating upstairs and downstairs (it gets crowded quickly in the evenings, so call in advance for a table). A 1997 gold medal winner at the Great American Beer Festival, it's no wonder this is the oldest microbrewery in the city, with a recently opened second branch in midtown.

Irving Plaza
 17 Irving Place @ 15th Street
 212.777.6800

Don't bother the bartenders here with requests for fancy drinks. The focus at Irving Plaza is on the music and it's only right, considering this venue plays host to many cutting-edge music makers of the moment. The half-finished lounge upstairs and couches by the women's restroom do little to take away the high school gymnasium feel of the main space, but it's all good since everyone's eyes and ears are trained at the stage. With a big crowd, the tight squeeze can bring the band **THIS** close to you. Get your tix early — shows here sell out on the regular.



The Jazz Standard
 116 East 27th Street
 Between Park Avenue South & Lexington
 212.576.2232

Across the street from Aubette, upstairs at 27 Standard is a restaurant and bar area, downstairs is the jazz club. Come here for the downstairs — the jazz club is large, with a separate section for smoking, a bar area with table service and a complete menu to choose from. The cover is \$10 (sometimes \$15) and is well worth it. The upstairs bar area is stuffy and has a transitory feel to it — as though people are just waiting by the bar pondering their next step. Take our suggestion and make a beeline for downstairs.

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant
 Hours F-Sa 12pm-2am Su 12pm-12am M-Th 12pm-1am
 Drink Prices Moderate
 Food American
 Nearest Subway 4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
 Credit Cards All Major

Type of Establishment Live Music
 Hours Varies Daily
 Drink Prices Expensive
 Food N/A
 Nearest Subway 4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
 Credit Cards AmEx, V, MC
 Tickets Only

Type of Establishment Jazz Club
 Hours F-Sa 8, 10:30pm, 12am T-Th 9, 10:30pm
 Drink Prices Moderate

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 11am-4am
Drink Prices
Moderate
Food
American
Nearest Subway
6 to 33rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Joshua Tree

513 3rd Avenue
Between 34th & 35th Streets
212.689.0058

Ever since this sports bar-cum-restaurant opened, it's been packed every night of the week. Located in the heart of Murray Hill, Joshua Tree has cashed in on the local twenty-something singles scene in the area. The drinks are well priced, the food is so-so but the space is big, and the three together make for a winning combination. Not recommended for a weekend night unless you want to jockey for space or cruise for the opposite sex. Best on a weeknight and best if you're from the neighborhood.

The Lemon

230 Park Avenue South
Between 18th & 19th Streets
212.614.1200

It's hard to sour on a place that meets the challenge of distinguishing itself from the other run-of-the-mill Gramercy bars and lounges. It has the great styling one expects, but the little touches, like the black and white portraits of rock stars in the upstairs lounge really personalize the space. The black-clad wait staff is exceptionally nice and sexy, too. The late-night beautiful people hang out in small groups — a true test of your pickup skills. Try pinning one of them alone at the bar when they get up for a martini. Use a poorly dressed lawyer or two for camouflage.

Luna Park

50 East 17th Street @ Union Square
212.475-8464

Luna Park is a great idea, and everybody knows it. Open from May to October, this open-air bar nestled in the middle of Union Square is a favorite of the stylists, publicists, and other -ists that crowd the place during the summer months. Sure, the margaritas are mediocre, but that's beside the point. At Luna Park it's all about the scene. When the plastic chairs and tables fill up, survey the action from the stone steps on the side. Spot some eligible singles at the bar, and move in for the kill.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant/Lounge
Hours
Daily 11:30am-2am
Drink Prices
Expensive
Food
American/Thai
Nearest Subway
4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
Credit Cards
AmEx, V, MC

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
May-October
M-F 12pm-4am
Drink Prices
Expensive
Food
Mediterranean
Nearest

Metronome

915 Broadway @ 21st Street
212.505.7400

Despite the ridiculous indoor VIP velvet rope that's supposed to cordon off the chosen few from the rest of us regular folk, pseudo-industry types still mingle with the shot-callers on the dancefloor. Designer labels abound and being understated is not an option. The mezzanine lounge is perfect for profiling, and judging from the number of people on their cell phones or checking their pagers, apparently you must at least look busy while sitting in one of the booths.

Pete's Tavern

129 East 18th Street @ Irving Place
212.473.7676

Opened in 1864, Pete's is the oldest continually operating establishment in the city. The front room of the pub still has its original tin ceiling, tile floor, antique mirrors and rosewood bar. It's the type of place that prompts crotchety old men to say, "They don't make places like they used to." Visit the shrine above booth #3 and you'll understand why the pub is nicknamed "The place O. Henry made famous." Epic proportions of Italian and American cuisine are served at this bar with three cozy dining rooms. Leave your belts at home, we promise, behemoth hamburgers are just the beginning.

Punch

913 Broadway
Between 20th & 21st Streets
212.673.6333

There is something refreshingly light and southern going on in this bar/restaurant. The intimate bar and bistro scene is dominated by an interesting mix of young artists, fashion designers, Europeans and aging hippies. Girlfriends seem to love meeting here, quietly chatting away against world music. Following the floor mosaic, steal a juicy olive from the big plate at the bar, and wind up in the chic restaurant with its inspirational transparent and gold organza curtains and fabric-covered chairs. Join the suits and fashion pros as they feast on an intricate mix of eclectic American dishes.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant/Club
Hours
T-Th 5pm-12am
F-Sa 5pm-4am
Drink Prices
Moderate
Food
Mediterranean
Nearest Subway
N,R to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
AmEx, V, MC

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 11am-2am
Drink Prices
Inexpensive
Food
Italian/American
Nearest Subway
4,5,6,N,R to Union Square
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 12pm-1am
Drink Prices
Moderate
Food
Eclectic American
Nearest Subway
4,5,6,N,R to Union Square

Type of
Establishment
Bar/ Lounge
Hours
Daily 5pm-
4am
Drink Prices
Expensive
Food
Pizza
Nearest
Subway
4,5,6,N,R to
Union Square
Credit Cards
AmEx, V, MC

Union Bar

204 Park Avenue South
Between 17th & 18th Streets
212.674.2105

Union Bar is cool because it's rare to find an upscale watering hole that doesn't try to force its coolness on you. Perhaps this is what's known as taste. Sure cocktails are \$9, but you know that going in. The well-designed bar/lounge combo is spacious, with plenty of room to navigate around the clusters of South Asian players and little black dresses with dueling cell phones. You might feel like a loser if you show up alone, but if you arrange to meet a group of friends there you'll come off like a pro.

Type of
Establishment
Lounge
Hours
W -F 5pm-4am
Sa 8pm-4am
Drink Prices
Expensive
Food
N/A
Nearest
Subway
6 to 34th
Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Vivid Bar

143 Madison Avenue
Between 31st & 32nd Streets
212.545.0722

Location, location, location. Away from both uptown and downtown competition, Vivid hides out on an anonymous block in the city's rug district. Pulling a diverse and youngish weekend crowd, the place gets packed — even with ample room to lounge, dance and socialize. So, after a little meet-and-greet or dancefloor, slide to the darkened lounge downstairs for some one-on-one. And because there's plenty of singles here, consider leaving your significant other at home — you don't bring sand to the beach, do you?