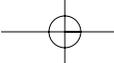




UPPER WEST SIDE





Life on the Upper West Side of Manhattan pulses with the contemporary sounds of New York City's artistic, intellectual and societal elite.

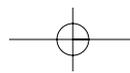
It's close enough to the city's swirling cultural epicenter in midtown, yet far enough to shake off some of the plastic madness and congestion. It's as worthy of its uptown moniker as the neighbors on the other side of the park, yet noticeably less pretentious. From the endless energy spilling out onto the streets from the rows of popular bars and restaurants, to the chic sidewalk eateries slightly hidden away, the Upper West Side is alive.

In the 19th century, the area was a sprawling suburban landscape considered a peripheral settlement to the bustling downtown New York City community. The construction of the Eighth Avenue line made mass-transit commuting a viable alternative to crowded life downtown, attracting thousands to the area. The designation of the neighborhood as the Upper West Side of Manhattan soon followed upon the completed construction of Central Park. The largest contemporary change, however, came about after construction of the Lincoln Center complex in the 60s. Its infusion of artistic and cultural energy planted the seed from which the neighborhood has grown.

Experience it over a sidewalk brunch at one of the many neighborhood eateries, or spend a few more dollars at the area's more famous establishments like Tavern on the Green or Cafe des Artistes. The popular nightlife scene in the crowded bars along Broadway, Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues echoes the energy and excitement of residents and visitors alike, so hang on.



- 1 420 Bar & Lounge
- 2 Cafe Lalo
- 3 Citrus Bar & Grill
- 4 Cleopatra's Needle
- 5 Edile
- 6 Hi-Life Bar & Grill
- 7 Indigo
- 8 Iridium Jazz Club (Empire Hotel)
- 9 Merchants NY
- 10 Moonlighting
- 11 Prohibition
- 12 Shark Bar
- 13 Triad (Darkstar Lounge)
- 14 Venue



Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
Daily 5pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 79th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

420 Bar & Lounge
420 Amsterdam Avenue @ 80th Street
(212) 579-8450

The secret kept by the black-velvet curtains is that this is one of the Upper West Side's best party places — MTV, CNBC throw theirs here. But you won't know if you walk into this dark, friendly, no-frills venue during the week, and watch locals push tables together or retreat to the elevated lounge area. Come here from Thursday (live band) through Saturday, and follow the neon sign "Downstairs-Bar-Lounge-Pool" to where a determined downtown party crowd dances the night away, plays some pool and continues the party on the couches. Be aware of the dress code — no hats, sneakers or t-shirts.

Type of Establishment
Cafe
Hours
Daily 9am-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Light menu/Desserts
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 79th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Cafe Lalo
201 West 83rd Street
Between Amsterdam & Broadway
(212) 496-6031

Attention to detail is the defining characteristic of this oh-so-Euro cafe. An ever-bustling atmosphere, filled with smart Upper West-siders, keeps the atmosphere lively all day and all night. Understandably so — with over 100 cakes, pies and tarts, a full bar of top-shelf liquors, wines, aperitifs and cognacs, and possibly the best Sunday brunch on the westside, you really can't go wrong. Add a touch of classical or jazz and you really have a great place to pass the evening and bypass the loud bass lines and smoke-filled rooms.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
M-Th 5:30pm-12am
F-Sa 5:30pm-1am
Su 11am-11pm
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Southwestern
Nearest Subway
1,2,3,9 to 72nd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Citrus Bar & Grill
320 Amsterdam Avenue @ 75th Street
(212) 595-0500

You can smell the lemony air and feel the dry desert wind blow through the cactus in this nouveau Southwestern venue. You won't leave thirsty from this 50s-retro diner bar — with over 150 tequila bottles stapled on round chrome shelves. A young, upscale but casual and upbeat Upper West Side crowd enjoys healthy dining to groovy, funky house music in the spacious dining room with enormous floor-to-ceiling glass and wooden doors that open to the sidewalk cafe. Bands and comedians perform at the Squeeze Lounge downstairs (Wednesday–Saturday) where beige retro leather couches, divided by green curtains, invite private partying.

Cleopatra's Needle
2485 Broadway
Between 92nd & 93rd Street
(212) 769-6969

Named after an Egyptian obelisk behind the Met, this jazz venue offers a trove of history and hidden treasures. A mellow 30s uptown ambiance and great jazz awaits you between sturdy columns, and the large, square wooden bar at the center invites you to just sit there all night and take in the late jam sessions. The layout is intriguing: a big TV screen towers above the bar, and the small stage, where jazz grandeurs play every night, is sort of hidden in the back. It's obvious that this is an insider's place — the crowd is made up of aging jazz musicians, intellectuals and locals.

Exile
117 West 70th Street
Between Columbus & Broadway
(212) 496-3272

The enigmatic arches and North African decor at first sight promise an exotic exile on a quiet Upper West Side street, but the climate and clientele of this industrial lounge remain very cool New York indeed. From the long and narrow marble bar, step down to a couple of dark lounge areas, divided by marble pillars with African masks. The upscale, corporate crowd, sporting intentionally unassuming designer clothes, downs Cosmos to disco tunes. Note: Don't miss the seasonal garden.

Hi-Life Bar & Grill
477 Amsterdam Avenue @ 83rd Street
(212) 787-7199

This lively, black-leather padded Upper West Side bar and restaurant offers something for everyone: 70s tunes by Lou Reed or the Talking Heads, posters of 50s pin-up girls, an Indian elephant god, a big TV screen, a little sushi bar featuring special half-price days and an aquarium wrapped in black leather. At 10 p.m. sharp, the panels dividing the bar from the diner/restaurant are removed, and a DJ starts spinning his selection of retro music. The crowd, young and fun-loving, couples, groups of girlfriends, guys in 70s shirts, seems to be very at ease with it all.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 3pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Continental
Nearest Subway
1,2,3,9 to 96th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
T-Th 7:30pm-1am
F-Sa 7:30pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,2,3,9 to 72nd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 5pm-12am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
Steaks/Sushi
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 79th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 5pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 79th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Indigo
487 Amsterdam Avenue
Between 83rd & 84th Street
(212) 362-0373

Want to have a blast on the Upper West Side in a pseudo-downtown atmosphere? Come to Indigo and be overwhelmed by a zealot DJ determined to blow your ears off. The bouncy young crowd in this boxy, dark and straightforward venue with 'bigger than life' surfer paintings, seems to totally love it. They can be found drinking a Surfers on Acid in the front bar while trying to make a connection with someone willing to disappear to the old leather sofas in the even darker back room — above which towers the zealot DJ.

Type of Establishment
Live Music
Hours
M-Th 8:45pm & 10pm
F-Sa 8:45pm, 10pm, 12am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
New American
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 66th Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx
\$20-25 Cover

Iridium Jazz Club (Empire Hotel)
48 West 63rd Street
Between Columbus & Broadway
(212) 582-2121

From the sensually shaped Merlot Bar with its curving, twisting and bending oversized couches, descend down to the intimate Iridium Jazz Club past a 3-dimensional, iridescent moving picture of jazz veteran Les Paul who performs there every Monday. This intimate 70s underground jazz venue, with intricate crisscrossing ceiling structures and guitar-shaped wall pillows, is visited by a distinguished jazz family of intelligentsia, tourists and passers-by, whose attentiveness seems to be internally felt rather than a polite gesture. Listen to renowned jazz bands such as the Jazz Messengers.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 11am-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
American
Nearest Subway
C,B to 86th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Merchants NY
521 Columbus Avenue
Between 85th & 86th Street
(212) 721-3689

Here is yet another popular Merchants (see Chelsea and Upper East Side) that gets packed with a lively after-work and upscale Upper West Side crowd. The concept works: sensual, soothing colors and shapes, enigmatic but simple Asian artifacts on dark brown-red walls, all adjusted to a hip New Yorker setting. An open, wave-shaped bar is the centerpiece, around which the crowd can observe each other, make eye contact and disappear to a table behind the heavy curtain in the cozy lounge in the back room, or to the large sidewalk cafe.

Moonlighting
511 Amsterdam Avenue
Between 84th & 85th Street
(212) 799-4643

High and low tech, dark sensuality and understated chic mark this moon-lit Upper West Side secret. Ritchie, who spins an irresistible mix of soul, funk, jungle, Latin and techno records, brings uptown dude, downtown girl, black hipster and white artist in 70s garb together. They dance against gold-framed mirrors and huge bronze panels, or on an elevated dance floor in the back (especially the girls, who seem to have discovered this as their favorite Upper West Side hide). Some cool off on the leather couches, and others, in tight twosomes, dance to traditional Latin rhythms in the intimate downstairs lounge.

Prohibition
503 Columbus Avenue
Between 84th & 85th Street
(212) 579-3100

Americans finally seem to have developed a taste for the forbidden and the immoral. Caricatures of decadent drinking, an elevated back bar with upside-down bottles serving as lighting devices, and a smoky pool table, evoke the ambiance of a 20s speakeasy. But the spacious, stylish locale and the loud crowd, a mix of young professionals and locals, is definitely 90s. They enjoy sitting together at long tables, hanging around the large bar (or the street cafe) and listening to live blues and jazz music.

Shark Bar
307 Amsterdam Avenue
Between 74th & 75th Street
(212) 874-8500

Queen Latifah, Mase, Jennifer Lopez, and many other hip-hop and rap stars, actors, basketball and football celebrities dine here unassumingly on succulent soul food. Spread out on different levels and painted in beige, blue and yellow, this place is as inviting as a friend's house. You may also come by yourself and hang out at the bar — it's cramped with an upscale, interesting-looking, artsy, professional and lively crowd where everyone seems to have something interesting to say to his or her neighbor.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
W-M 7pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 86th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 5:30pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Appetizers
Nearest Subway
C,B to 86th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Su-Th 5pm-12am
F-Sa 5pm-1:30am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Soul
Nearest Subway
1,2,3,9 to 72nd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of
Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 5pm-
1am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
American
Nearest
Subway
1,2,3,9 to
72nd Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Triad (Darkstar Lounge)
158 West 72nd Street
Between Columbus & Broadway
(212) 362-2590

Everyone seems to know each other and the common secret of this intimate music and comedy club: this is the place to hear the grand old, and the brand new, seven nights a week. During Sunday night's Soul Gathering, Broadway singers, songwriters and R&B musicians, who haven't signed a label yet, perform for an enthusiastic and interactive audience. Start at the cozy, dark wooden bar and lounge where local artists engage in deep conversations, then venture a few steps down, get a table and enjoy the show on the theatrical stage made of blue wood, mirrors and curtains.

Type of
Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
Daily 7pm-
4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest
Subway
B,C to
86th Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Venue
505 Columbus Avenue
Between 84th & 85th Street
(212) 579-9463

Take your pick at this funky, dark and sensually throbbing cave of cosmopolitan pleasures: stop at the luscious couches, step up to the large bar with an active people-watching scene, where a fashionable, hip, young crowd is chatting away and where guys in suits are on the lookout for female companions to take to the back lounge. Here, elevated mattresses and pillows in metallic, dark stretch-velvet are lit by red lights and watched by a diligent guard! Or venture downstairs into the small disco with carpets and moving psychedelic pictures. A DJ spins a great mix of house, funk, and James Brown.