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Sample New York Itinerary – spring 2006

This is Day Three of a four day tailored itinerary created for a mother and her 22 year old daughter. It was their second visit to the city and they were interested in exploring neighbourhoods at a leisurely pace so they could soak in the atmosphere. They wanted to keep this trip casual, varied and fun.

day three - sunday

Hope you had fun in the sun and the Yankees won! After the theatre last night you are probably off to a later start than normal this morning. Today's itinerary is filled with more suggestions than you can comfortably fit in a day so pick and choose whatever suits your Sunday mood.

overview of the day:

Today you'll explore the neighbourhood of the Upper West Side (UWS). This relaxed area is home to a mixed bunch of professionals, artists and young families. With quiet, tree-lined streets, rows of brownstones and lots of small dog parks it feels very removed from the concrete canyons of Midtown. We'll suggest a stroll (or ride) through the park, some history on the Upper East Side, a yoga class, a fabulous tasting menu and late night drinks at a tucked away bar to finish your day. Put on your casual clothes (and don't forget your comfy yoga wear) and head out of your hotel to catch the 1 or 9 train heading Uptown.

morning

Hop off at 79th Street and walk over to Columbus Avenue. Enjoy a casual brunch at the neighbourhood **Isabella's**. They don't accept reservations for Sunday brunch, but if you arrive by 10:30am it shouldn't be a problem to snag a table either inside or out on the sidewalk. The food is reasonably priced and we love the strawberry yogurt spread that comes with their basket of fresh baked breads. 359 Columbus Avenue, SE corner of Columbus Avenue & 77th Street, 212.724.2100, Sundays from 10am-11:30pm.

Once you've enjoyed your eggs benny or fruit muesli head across the street to check out the weekly **flea/green market**. It's not huge so it is a quick wander, but be sure to hit the stalls inside the school gym as well as in the play yard. You might come across local jams or honey from Central Park bees or find an unusual piece of vintage clothing or jewelry. We still use a funky lamp that we found here one weekend. Columbus Avenue between 76th & 77th Streets, Sundays from 10am-5pm.

There is a **craft fair** on Columbus Avenue today with tons of stalls lining Columbus Avenue and 81st Street with imaginative and high quality merchandise. You'll find great artwork, handmade jewelry, local kids clothes, unique ceramics and budding designers. For cute t-shirts, look for the BugsT stand (bugst.com) and Designs by Agi (designsbyagi.com – the site does not do the whimsical clothes justice!). Honore by Beth Rosen (honore-nyc.com) makes beautifully stitched rain jackets and distinctive clothing and accessories. We get compliments whenever we wear our Honore creations – search out her stall. We always find something we like at Crafts on Columbus!

If you called ahead and are still keen on a horseback ride, walk up Columbus Avenue to 89th Street where you'll find the **Claremont Riding Academy**. This is last of the city stables and it is a real treat to saddle up and ride the bridle paths through the park. 175 West 89th Street, 212.724.5100, Sundays from 8am-5pm, \$55/hour.

If you've opted to pass on the horses today walk over to Broadway. If you still haven't popped in for a cheap and cheerful manicure yet, our local shop is **Picasso Nails** where you can get a manicure for \$10 or mani/pedi combo for \$33. It is just a little hole in the wall, but Amy and her efficient staff will have you in and out in a flash with perfectly polished nails. 2350 Broadway between 85th & 86th Streets, 212.496.1133, Sundays from 11am-7pm.

Wandering down Broadway you'll pass the standard shops of Victoria's Secret, Coach, Origins, Ann Taylor, Barnes & Noble, Banana Republic, NineWest and Filene's Basement, among others. The new **Barney's Co-op** offers less mainstream, designer selections. 2151 Broadway near 75th Street, 646.335.0978 (yes, it is still in Manhattan it just has the new exchange), Sundays from 11am-6pm, barneys.com.

In the same area you'll find the small Lord of the Fleas shop – a local favourite. While it can be hit or miss, we often find a fun vintage piece or two within their racks. 2142 Broadway between 75th & 76th Streets, 212.875.8815, Sundays from 11am-7:30pm.

Need a sugar buzz? Continue down Broadway to 72nd Street and pop into the **Buttercup Bake Shop** for a decadent treat. We're addicted to their German Chocolate cupcake! 141 West 72nd Street between Columbus & Amsterdam Avenues, 212.787.3800, Sundays from 10am-7pm. Or, enjoy an ice cream or a smoothie from **Emack & Bolio's**. 389 Amsterdam Avenue @ 79th Street, 212.362.2747, Sundays from 12pm-11pm.

If you're still in a retail mood, **Theory** offers a great selection of classically simple women's basics. 230 Columbus Avenue between 70th & 71st Streets, 212.362.3676, Sundays from 12pm-6pm, theory.com. While the irreverent Betsey Johnson just a few doors down always has bright, fun, flirty pieces. 248 Columbus Avenue, 212.362.3364, Sundays from 11am-7:30pm, betseyjohnson.com.

afternoon

On sunny days, Upper West Side locals head to the **79th Street Boat Basin** to enjoy simple burgers, salads, iced teas and beer alongside the Hudson River. Access the café at the end of 79th Street under the highway overpass - you'll see stairs to take you down. 79th Street & the Hudson River, 212.496.5542, Sundays from 11am until sunset, boatbasin.com.

If you're not in the mood for a burger still meander along the river path to see a marina several New Yorkers call 'home'. The waitlist for a coveted boat slip is several years long! Walk up the often overlooked **Riverside Park** and make your way over to Zabar's to pick up some gourmet picnic food. 2245 Broadway @ 80th Street, 212.787.2000, Sundays from 9am-6pm, broadwayzabars.com.

Zabar's is an Upper West Side institution that has been around since the 30's and is still family-run. There is apparently a 'Zabar' in the store at all times! Be sure to find the back stairs up to the mezzanine level which is stacked to the rafters with useful kitchen gadgets. Back on the main floor you'll join a bustling crowd of locals buying freshly ground coffee, smoked fish, cured meats and delicious cheeses – all the perfect fixings for a picnic in the park.

If the weather's not so nice you can always pop into @SQC for a light snack. We like the curry chicken tapas salad and the delicious roasted squash and coconut soup with Belgian fries. 270 Columbus Avenue @ 72nd Street, 212.579.0100, Sundays from 8:30am-12am.

Take your picnic (or your full tummies) east along the quiet, leafy street of 81st until you hit the park. Along the way you'll pass beautiful brownstones with grand stoops and bright flowerboxes. You'll likely walk right past the non-descript 129 West 81st Street, but this is where Jerry Seinfeld lived once he settled in Manhattan in 1977. His apartment on the hit show was based on his 4th floor studio in this building.

Once in **Central Park**, enjoy your picnic at our favourite spot near Turtle Pond. This is the park at its best – a nice grassy spot where you can watch friends playing baseball, kids running down by the pond and families pushing strollers - all escaping the busy streets for a while. It's also a nice place to read the hefty *Sunday Times* if you picked up a copy. A detailed map of Central Park is enclosed.

After you've enjoyed a rest, continue east along any park path and you'll hit Fifth Avenue and Museum Mile. Here you can easily pop into any of the great museums, but we suggest the smaller **Museum of the City of New York** as there is an interesting exhibit on at the moment – *Glamour, New York Style*.

Here you'll see a collection of glamorous costumes, people and locations from over 200 years of NYC history. Once out of the park, walk along 80th Street to Madison Avenue to catch the M1, M3 or M4 bus up to the 104th Street stop – your MetroCard works on the buses as well. 1220 Fifth Avenue @ 103rd Street, 212.534.1672, Sundays from 10am-5pm, suggested admission is \$9, mcny.org.

After seeing the evolution of the New York glam scene, hop in a cab for the quick ride to Central Park South (CPS). If you are still interested in attending a yoga class drop into **Exhale**. They offer yoga classes at 4pm and 5:30pm today and the drop-in fee is \$30. With two beautiful, airy rooms this is a tranquil spot to practice your sun salutations. 150 CPS between 6th & 7th Avenues, 212.249.3000, exhalespa.com.

It's only a short stroll back to your hotel for a shower before your dinner reservation.

evening

Hop in a taxi for your 8pm dinner reservation at one of our all-time favourite restaurants, **Gramercy Tavern**. We suggest ordering the amazing tasting menu, even better when paired with flights of wine! Sit back and enjoy the superb food and impeccable service. We love ending a meal with their incredible selection of after-dinner cheeses. 42 East 20th Street between Broadway & Park Avenue, 212.477.0777, gramercytavern.com.

Depending on your mood, the hour and the weather you may choose to either walk up Park Avenue, catch the 4, 5 or 6 trains Uptown or hail a cab to Grand Central (15 Vanderbilt Avenue entrance). Stop in at the **Campbell Apartment** for a drink and perhaps live jazz. You'll find this room located up a short flight of stairs from the ground level at the SW end of the Terminal. In the 1920's this was the office of businessman John W. Campbell and it has all the glamour of Gatsby's New York 212.953.0409, Sundays from 3pm-11pm. Enjoy a nightcap in this civilized bar and catch a cab back to your hotel.

Enjoy a good sleep as your last full day in town tomorrow will get you out on the river after breakfast and over to an interesting book reading after lunch.