



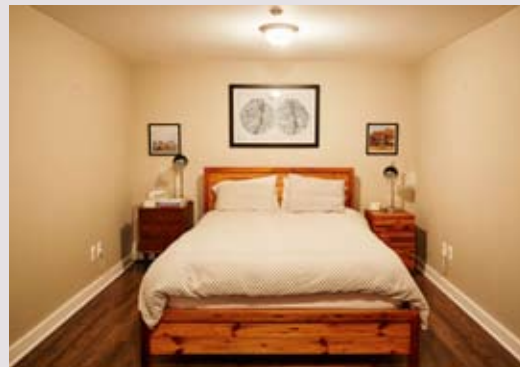
Local knowledge

Wherever you go in the world, a little insight
can take you from tourist to insider.
Meet the hosts of Airbnb



New York

Its postcard-worthy landmarks have inspired endless artists, directors and musicians, making New York's skyline perhaps the world's most instantly recognisable. Yet for all of its immovable icons, the city is in constant flux, its residents pushing boundaries and creating an exhilaratingly evolving home.



Meet Clarissa & Rich

Which neighbourhoods are hot in 2015 and why?

We're biased but Greenpoint is the place to be. You're surrounded by top-notch restaurants and cafés, well-curated boutiques and eclectic bars.

Where are your favourite cafés and restaurants?

We like smaller joints that serve tasty food and good vibes. Brunch at Five Leaves, fish at the Greenpoint Fish & Lobster Co counter and Balinese at Selamat Pagi are our Greenpoint go-to's.

Where are the best places to get some fresh air?

The High Line is by far our favourite. The Cloisters, Central Park and Prospect Park are also must-sees when seeking respite.

For art and culture, where would you recommend?

The new Whitney is worth a visit and the neighbouring streets have lots of galleries. For music, the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

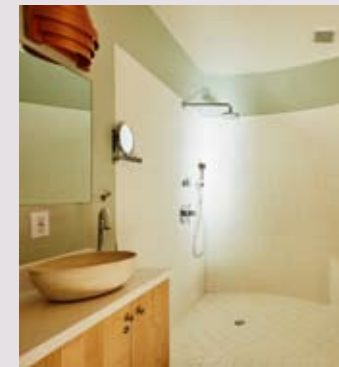
Which of New York's sights are essential for visitors?

The history of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island is moving, as is the 9/11 Memorial. Otherwise the best advice is to get around — the essence of New York is in the little things and the characters you meet.



Los Angeles

From the Hollywood Hills — iconic signage included — to Venice Beach, this West Coast metropolis is a sprawling beast. Under blue skies and flanked by palms trees, LA is characterised by cultural diversity, famed shopping and a feverish nightlife. And there's always a scenic respite from the bright lights.



Meet Marc & Judith

How can visitors experience Los Angeles like a local?

Explore a variety of neighbourhoods. Between Silver Lake, Los Feliz, Hollywood, West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Downtown, Venice and Santa Monica, there are many colourful things.

Which are your number-one restaurants?

Stella in Silver Lake for breakfast, French café Figaro, The Hungry Cat for fish and Gjelina in Venice for organic food.

Talk us through the city's cultural highlights.

The old Vista movie theatre in Los Feliz, food trucks in Venice and the Getty Museum. Also, don't miss out on a show at the Griffith Observatory. The Hollywood Bowl and Greek Theater are open-air concert gems. For indie gigs, Hotel Café in Hollywood.

Which borough is worthy of extended exploration?

With boutique shops and restaurants, Silver Lake is a uniquely creative area. Downtown mixes old and new and has much to offer. Melrose Avenue and Third Street are also great to explore.

Where do you recommend going when the sun shines?

Venice Beach or Malibu's Zuma Beach. Or take the Mulholland Drive along the top of the hills and enjoy the views of the city.

Meet Jadzia

What makes Kilkenny such a special city?

Its charm dates back to the Middle Ages and some of Ireland's most impressive sites are found here. It's a tangle of majestic passageways, with rows of colourful shopfronts and centuries-old pubs that will entertain you with traditional live music.

Where can visitors taste Kilkenny's authentic food?

Anocht at the Kilkenny Design Centre is fantastic. Also worth a visit are Marble City Bar, Zuni and Rinuccini.

Talk us through a typical night out in Kilkenny.

Stroll through Kilkenny Castle's gardens, duck into Kyteler's Inn for a bowl of Irish stew and then head to The Hole in the Wall for a glass of wine.

How can visitors experience the city like a local?

Wander along the River Nore and settle down with a picnic. Also strike up a chat with a passer-by; we all love talking.

Where are the best spots to relax in the city?

The gardens of Kilkenny Castle or, on Thursdays, the farmers' market at The Parade beside the castle.



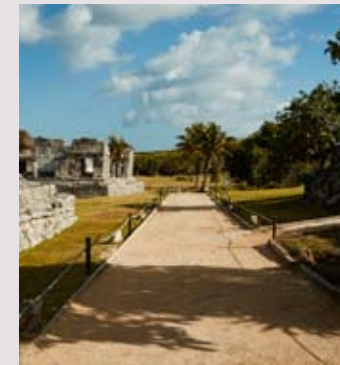
Kilkenny

Its rolling countryside, imposing mediaeval castle and network of 17th-century streets — punctuated by the meandering River Nore — make Kilkenny a city full of charm. Yet with their time-honoured passion for craft — best witnessed at the Kilkenny Design Centre — hearty cuisine and love of live music, the city's welcoming locals also play a lively role in putting it on the map.



Tulum

Blessed with a tropical climate, white-sand beaches and a technicolour townscape, Tulum is one of Mexico's most-striking destinations. Popular among those keen to see the Mayan ruins and recently a darling of the style set, its inhabitants are versed in the beauty that surrounds them.



Meet Ed

Of Tulum's many beaches, which do you recommend?

Playa Paraiso. It is within the Tulum National Park and is very sparsely developed. This allows for a large, public beach for both inhabitants and visitors.

How has the city evolved in the past few years?

It is growing and continues to grow. It was tiny before and now it is up to "very small". Fewer than 29,000 people live here and as many as 20 per cent of those are foreigners. It is a truly international yet low-key town.

How do the locals like to unwind?

Yoga is the most common relaxation activity. Days on the beach and live music at nights come in at a close second and third.

Where are the best places to find authentic Mexican cuisine?

My favourite place is Taqueria Honorio. Handmade tortillas with slow-cooked pork, or *pibil*, make for the best tacos in town. Come early though because they run out of food by midday.

What are Tulum's cultural highlights?

The city's Mayan heritage, from the long-standing ruins to live and current events. There are lots of activities related to Mayan traditions.

Paris

Beyond the romantic clichés, Paris is one of the world's most visited cities for a host of reasons, not least its sophisticated denizens' command of art, fashion and gastronomy. Dissected by the River Seine, Paris's elegant boulevards, boutique-laden streets and era-spanning architecture make it an eminently enjoyable city to explore. And there's also plenty to love in some of the recently regenerated, lesser-known areas.



Meet Charlotte

What makes Paris such a special city?

It has a spirit of style and fashion that everyone should experience. The architecture is amazing; beyond the famous landmarks, every building is a marvel. It is one of those cities where getting lost is actually a real pleasure.

Where are the best places to find authentic French cuisine?

Watch out for touristy restaurants serving snails – not many French people eat them. I'd recommend going to Rue Montmartre or Rue Montorgueil.

Where are the best spots to relax in the city?

There are many parks: Parc des Buttes Chaumont, Le Jardin des Plantes or Jardin du Luxembourg. Or rent an electric boat on the Canal de l'Ourcq and sail north to Parc de la Villette.

How has Paris changed in recent years?

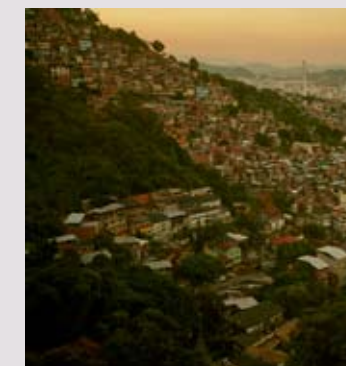
It's expanding; the new hip places are outside of the cities. Check out Montreuil, Nanterre, Pantin or Aubervilliers.

What is your perfect evening out in the city?

A walk along the Seine from Pont Neuf towards Concorde and dinner at Le Saut du Loup. Later, go for a dance at Le Comptoir Général.

Rio de Janeiro

Amid an almost impossibly beautiful backdrop of mountains, lakes and beaches, Rio de Janeiro has evolved into a vibrant city where buzzing beachside districts and history-rich colonial buildings give way to leafy hilltop communities that offer stunning vistas. Proud of its culture and immense beauty, Rio and its people make for one of the world's most unforgettable cities.



Meet Pedro

As well as its iconic beaches, what makes Rio special?

The openness of the *cariocas* [locals] makes it easy to fit in. Also its history: there's a lot of colonial architecture as well as interesting museums and cultural centres.

How do the locals relax?

They go to the beach. It can be called the "social room" of the *cariocas*: it's where you meet friends, eat, read and exercise.

What might surprise visitors to the city?

Downtown Rio is often overlooked by tourists but there are many places worth visiting: the muse-

ums, the restaurants around Praça XV, the bars in Lapa, the bucolic streets of Santa Teresa. There's something for everyone.

Is there a delicacy that every visitor should try?

You can't come to Brazil and not taste *feijoada*, a traditional dish of black beans and pork. If you want something lighter, try the *pão de queijo* [gluten-free cheese balls].

How has Rio evolved in recent years?

The past few years have been marked by preparation for last year's World Cup and next year's Olympics. This has meant a lot of construction but soon we'll be able to reap the fruits of this work.

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