

Meandering around Manhattan with Walks of New York

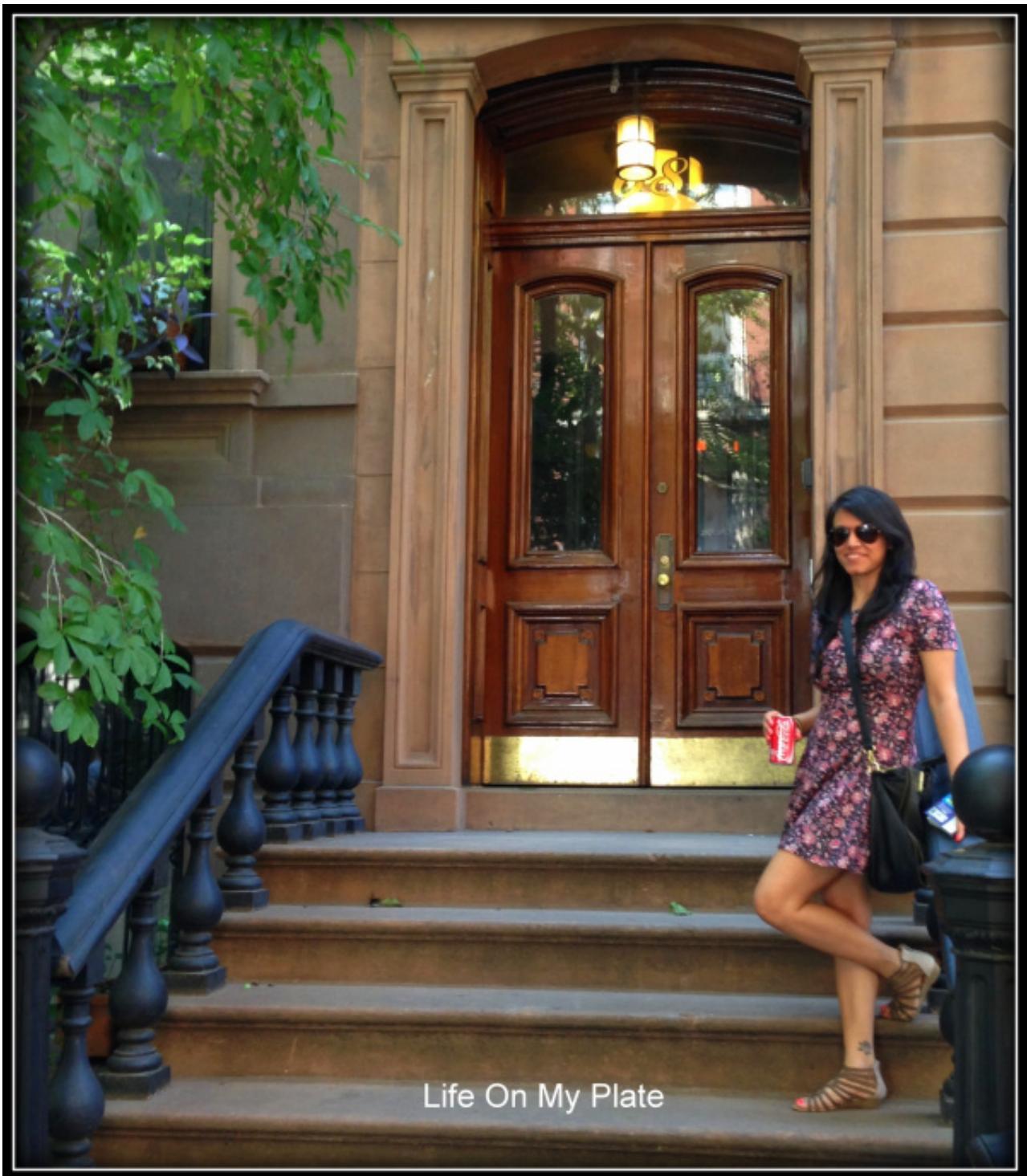
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I truly believe that the best way to experience a city, to really soak it up; is on foot. An aimless amble down an alleyway, or a saunter down a street; there's nothing quite like the thrill of discovery in a new place.

New York City is totally a walking city. The grid pattern makes it super simple to navigate, once you've got the hang of it of course. I don't even know how much I walked in the 10 days I spent in NYC. Every morning I would head to a new neighbourhood, and just, walk! It's how I stumbled upon the building used to represent the home of Monica, Rachel, Joey and Chandler. Or the gorgeous brownstone in the West Village that served as the exterior to Carrie Bradshaw's apartment.



Ok, this is actually just adjacent to Carrie's place, but 66 Perry Street had too many ladies posing for pictures in front, so I cheated by posing at the adjacent but identical brownstone!

My point is, I'm a total sucker for walks, self-guided or hosted; and on my recent trip to New York I did both! Not only did I explore as many Manhattan neighbourhoods as I could on my own, I also went on a **Welcome to New York** walking tour with **Walks of New York**.

Walks of New York is an American-owned and operated walking tour company from the same guys that founded **Walks of Italy**. They too believe that the best way to travel is to walk, to appreciate your surroundings, and to discover a city at ground level. They offer 5 New York Walking Tours as of now, at prices starting at USD 35 per person. You can get a taste of the history, traditions, and food of New York on the 3-hour **Lower East Side Stories** Walk, and even experience a **Broadway Behind the Scenes** walk for a look at life behind the curtains.

The **Welcome to New York Walking Tour** that I went on was superb! It was the perfect way for me to get my bearings in Manhattan as well as visit all the main attractions and must-visit sites of Midtown. The tour lasted a little over 2 ½ hours, and we covered everything I had hoped for in this area.



The Chrysler Building

What you will do

You'll meet your guide for the day at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Once the introductions to the rest of the small group are through, you will briefly explore the cathedral, and then commence with the walking. You will explore all the sights and sounds of vibrant Midtown Manhattan on foot; all while listening to some fascinating stories and interesting anecdotes about the city and its people. It isn't very strenuous per say, but the tour does involve a fair bit of walking so keep that in mind. Wear walking shoes if needed.





Rockefeller Center

What you will see

Beginning with **St. Patrick's Cathedral**, you'll get to see the **Rockefeller Center** and the spot where they put up the famous Ice Skating Ring and Christmas Tree every year; you'll visit **Bryant Park** and the **Diamond District**, you'll see the **New York Public Library** and the **Chrysler Building** from the outside, you'll even visit the stunning **Grand Central Terminal** including the famed Whispering Gallery. You'll experience the visual onslaught and sensory overload that is **Times Square**. And as the finale, you'll see an aerial view of the colourful cacophony of Times Square from a rooftop nearby. But the best thing you'll see, and this was the highlight for me, will be the priceless historical photos and images that your guide will show you of each of the attractions you are visiting. Pictures of what these same places looked like years, even decades ago. The images were lovely, and the perspective they put everything in even more so. So keep an eye on that Big Yellow Book in your guide's hand!



The American Radiator Building, now The Bryant Park Hotel with the Empire State Building in the background
(as seen from Bryant Park)

What you will learn

You will learn about the history of the buildings you are seeing, the styles and form of architecture. How and why they came to be. You'll also learn interesting tidbits about New York and its people, the things that made them tick. Our guide seemed to really know and understand New York, and his enthusiasm for his city was contagious. But that's not all, he was more than happy to give us suggestions on what more to see, things to do, places to visit and what to eat.

What I have to say

Our guide was Jeff Dobbins, and I must say he was fabulous! He had a wealth of information to share about New York and I loved every minute of my afternoon. Unfortunately, on the day of our tour the Times Square rooftop that Jeff took us to was hosting a private party, so we were unable to enjoy that aspect of the tour; but we learnt of a fabulous place and were more than happy to go back on another day to enjoy drinks and that glittering view.



The Group with Jeff, our Guide for the day

I'd recommend the Welcome to New York Walking Tour as a great way to spend a couple of hours towards the beginning of your trip. Not only did we get a wonderful overview of Midtown Manhattan, we checked off a few of the places on our list and then some. And it also gave us a great base from which to explore further.

Note: The **Welcome to New York Walking Tour** costs \$35 per person. Check the running days and availability beforehand, and book online [here](#).