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New York: What You Can't Miss This Summer

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ain. There's tons to discover in the Big Apple beyond the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, and the Plaza Hotel.



My teenage daughter and I took four days this week to explore the city and find the best lodging, dining, tours, and shows -- all the ones that aren't yet famous, but should be.

1) **Beautiful: The Carole King Musical.** Until the Tonys the other night, you may never have heard of Jessie Mueller. Believe me when I say that's going to change. This young actor/singer made the earth move under our feet with [her portrayal of Carole King](#). The supporting performers help her bring Carole's world to life and will have you tapping your toes to songs like "Locomotion" and "Take Good Care of My Baby"; you'll sway to ballads like "So Far Away" and "You've Got a Friend."

2) **The baby gorillas at the [Bronx Zoo](#).** You might not have young kids. You might not even be the parent of young kids. But you might be the parent of young kids. Go to the Bronx Zoo this summer and see the gorillas. The babies are cuter than humans, I swear. The mamas are so relatable, with the way they cuddle their infants and try

3) **The Tryp Hotel.** OK. We all know that New York hotels have tiny rooms with even smaller bathrooms. That's why you must check out [the Tryp](#). Our room with two beds was bigger than a lot of NYC apartments, with hardwood floors, big windows, and a gigantic walk-in shower. The hotel is near Penn Station, an easy walk to Times Square, and right on the subway line.

4) **Walks of New York Tours.** Sure, you've probably been to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Broadway, and Eataly. But you haven't done them with [Walks of New York](#). This small tour company, newly arrived in New York from Italy, hosts fun, educational tours where you really learn something. I spent [two and a half hours wandering around the Met with co-owner Jason](#), who's an encyclopedia in human form. Best of all, the tours are small, with a max of 12 people and plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

5) **Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill.** Love Billie Holiday? Love clubs? Want to have the ultimate Broadway experience? Head to Circle in the Square to see [Audra McDonald in this one-woman show about Billie Holiday's life](#), all set one evening in a club, in front of a microphone, during one of the great "Lady Day's" sets. McDonald made history with her sixth Tony win for her performance in this show. Insider's tip: Spring for the table seating. You'll be mere feet from the star (who interacts with the audience), and you'll get free champagne.

6) **E.T.C. Custom Events.** Don't want a group tour? Or want a tour customized to your specific wishes with your own guests? Contact Evan Levy at [E.T.C.](#) and tell her what interests you and your family or group. We joined her and one of three sisters who owns [Argosy Books](#), a midtown shop chock-full of books, prints, and maps. My Alice-loving daughter was thrilled by the Lewis Carroll theme. Next time we're planning to try a historical tour of Central Park.



7) **Capizzi Pizza.** Holy pizza, Batman. On our last night in New York, we stayed in our room at the T

boy, did we score. The pizza at [Capizzi](#) is charred from the wood fire oven and topped (if you like) with thick-cut pepperoni and Italian sausage. It was the perfect end to an off-the-beaten-path New York trip.

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