



Big Apple Greeter
New York City

A GUIDE TO TRIBECA

Settled in the 17th century, “TriBeCa” is a new name derived from the “triangle below Canal Street.” Originally an industrial area, Tribeca today is noted for its many tiny triangular parks, cobblestone streets, art galleries, trendy restaurants, and the cast iron architecture of many of its buildings.

Where Is TriBeCa?

Tribeca is an area of Manhattan bounded by Canal Street on the north and Vesey Street on the south, between Broadway and the Hudson River.

It's Easy to Get to TriBeCa:

The Chambers Street and Canal Street subway stops on the A and C trains take you to Church Street. The Chambers Street station on the 2 and 3 trains and the Franklin Street station on the 1 train take you to West Broadway.



Information regarding the accessibility of subway stations and buses may be found at <http://www.mta/ada/stations.htm>. All Metropolitan Transportation Authority buses in New York City are accessible. Locations indicated with a wheelchair icon are accessible.

About TriBeCa

The area we now call Tribeca was originally farmland. In 1705, Queen Anne of England granted the land west of Broadway to Trinity Church. By the early 19th century this was a wealthy residential neighborhood. Elegant mansions were built around Duane Park and Hudson Square (now the Holland Tunnel traffic rotary).

In the mid 19th century, numerous homes were replaced by commercial buildings, factories and warehouses as the area became the center of New York’s wholesale food business, specializing in produce and dairy products. The western part of Tribeca became known as the Washington Market district, which was the name of the wholesale produce market.

Photos:

Cast-iron lamp in Tribeca’s Historic District

Two must-sees: The Tribeca Grill and the Tribeca Film Festival

Greeter’s Secret — In 1848 James Bogardus built the first cast-iron building façade in what is now Tribeca. Cast iron held a major advantage for builders in an age before electricity, allowing for large windows that admitted more light. Architecturally the buildings mixed and matched columns, doors and window frames selected from a catalog. Construction was quick because the pre-fabricated parts were bolted together at the building site. By the 1880’s, steel began to replace cast iron; today it is rarely used.





Above: A plaque commemorating Duane Park's origins and the luxurious Tribeca Grand Hotel



Duane Park Patisserie

A residential loft building, originally built in 1845 as a whalebone cutting factory

4-star restaurant Chanterelle at the former New York Mercantile Exchange

During the mid 20th century, the food distribution businesses moved to Hunt's Point in the Bronx for more space and modern facilities. Eventually, Washington Market was torn down to build the World Trade Center. Artists and small businesses began to move into the large warehouse and loft buildings, just as they had done years before in nearby SoHo. The former commercial lofts became spacious apartments. Today, Tribeca is one of the city's most desirable residential neighborhoods, retaining traces of its colonial and commercial past among luxury lofts, unpretentious restaurants and stores catering to the many workers in the nearby government buildings and courthouses.

Because Tribeca was a commercial neighborhood for so long, it had few parks and amenities for residents. Community groups working with New York City officials created many of the delightful parks that now dot the neighborhood, and residents cherish their green spaces, no matter how small.

Things to See and Do in TriBeCa

 **1 Duane Park** — A small, isolated triangle of land, formerly a 62-acre farm, was purchased from Trinity Church in 1797 for the then substantial sum of \$5.00(!). Both sides of Duane Street between Hudson and Greenwich have lovely 19th century buildings. Recent owners of 172 Duane Street have recessed the façade leaving the original cast iron to stand out as sculpture. Stores along this street feature antiques, art and furniture. While at the park, stop at the Duane Park Patisserie, 179 Duane Street, to enjoy the yummy cupcakes and seasonal desserts for every occasion.

 **2 Finn Square** is a tiny triangular park, named for World War I hero Philip Schuyler Finn. Concrete and weeds filled the site for many years. In the 1990's, cobblestones, flowers and shrubs transformed the square into a beautiful example of urban landscaping, showing how much can be done in a small space.

 **3 Tribeca Park** — Formerly part of the Lispenard Swamp, at the intersection of Walker Street and Avenue of the Americas, what is now Tribeca Park became another triangular park with the purchase of the land in 1810. Try, as you walk through the park, to imagine its former existence as a swamp.

 **4 Washington Market Park** (Washington Street and Jay Street) bares the name of the old produce market. Almost suffering the fate of becoming a parking lot, civic virtue prevailed and it is now Tribeca's largest park featuring a large playground as well as hosting the weekly farmer's market.

5 Harrison St. houses — These restored 18th century town houses are the oldest buildings in the area. Three of the houses were moved from nearby Washington Street in the 1970's when the World Trade Center was built. John McComb, the architect who designed City Hall, lived here. Note the contrast in scale to Independence Plaza, the large apartment complex across the street.

6 The former **New York Mercantile Exchange** at 6 Harrison St. is a five-story gabled brick building with a corner tower. The second-story windows opened onto the trading floor, where butter, cheese and eggs were traded during the 19th century. Today, the building is a condominium, with the four star French restaurant Chanterelle on the ground floor.

 **7 Staple Street** was named for the eggs, butter, cheese, and other staples unloaded here by ships to avoid paying duty on extra cargo. Check out the green pedestrian walkway overhead, linking two of the old warehouses.

 **8 20 North Moore Street** — John Kennedy Jr. and his wife Carolyn resided in this building at the time of his death in July 1999.

 **9 Franklin Street** one of Tribeca's characteristic cobblestone streets lined with converted warehouses art galleries, antique stores, and bars offers the visitor many interesting distractions.

 **10 New York Alleys** — There aren't too many alleys in Manhattan. Those that do exist often provide a moody setting for filming TV and motion picture detective shows. Put yourself in the scene at Franklin Place, a one-block ally, or at St. John's lane.

 **11 White Street** — Let There be Neon at 38 White Street offers custom neon signs as well as delightful artwork. A stroll along White Street between Broadway and West Broadway reveals many other distinctive attractions. Among the most notable are the Soho Photo Gallery at 15 White Street, a cooperative of 100 artists and photographers located in a former egg warehouse. The Civic Center Synagogue, also known as the Synagogue for the Arts, at 49 White Street offers traditional services as well as art exhibits and concerts that are open to the public. Check out the buildings curving façade. Next door at 41 White Street, the Flea Theater was founded to create “a joyful hell in a small space.”



Above: Kennedy House, Tribeca storefronts, the flame-shaped shell of the Civic Center Synagogue and the pedestrian walkway above Staple Street



Outside some of Tribeca's trendy restaurants

When It's Time to Eat

 One of Tribeca's most famous restaurants is **The Tribeca Grill**, at 375 Greenwich Street, owned by actor Robert DeNiro and his partners.

 An upscale choice for sushi is **Nobu**, at 57 Hudson Street.

 Refresh yourself with flavorful Korean food at **Kori** located at 253 Church Street.

 **Puffy's Tavern**, 81 Hudson Street, is a low-key pub where you can soak up the atmosphere of Tribeca's past.

 **Bouley Bakery** at 130 West Broadway offers a bakery and café for a refreshing pause.

Shopping

 **Anbar** shoe store, 60 Reade Street, features great fashion choices and prices at a no-frill, self service store.

 **Bazzini's Nuts and Confections**, 339 Greenwich Street, has sold nuts, coffee beans, and candies at this location since 1886.

 If you are, or want to be an artist do not miss **Pearl Paint Store** at 308 Canal Street, with a huge selection of art supplies. High-end designer home furnishings stores can be found along Franklin Street and Hudson Street.

Web Links

More information about Tribeca's many interesting attractions can be found at www.tribeca.org.

Log on to www.toastartwalk.com for information about a self-guided tour of the many art galleries in Tribeca.

If you are a gallery enthusiast, a listing of galleries can be found at www.tribecagalleryassoc.org.

For information about the annual Tribeca Film Festival, log on to www.tribecafilmfestival.org.

Greeter's Secret —
A visit to Tribeca must include Canal Street, named for the stream that once flowed there. Today a heavily trafficked truck route connecting Brooklyn with New Jersey, crowds swarm the street searching for everything from jewelry (real and counterfeit), to oddly shaped pieces of plastic at the industrial plastics stores. Vegetable stands and fish markets serve nearby Chinatown. You can find good deals on luggage, electronics, t-shirts, sunglasses and so much more.

About Big Apple Greeter

Founded in 1992, Big Apple Greeter's mission is to enhance New York City's worldwide image while enriching the City experience for its visitors. Connecting with business and leisure travelers from all over the United States and the world, Greeters bring visitors to neighborhoods in all five boroughs, promote tourism throughout the city, and help visitors discover the ease of using public transportation. More than 350 volunteer Greeters, speaking over 30 languages, enjoy giving their time and energy back to their hometown. Big Apple Greeter volunteers research, write and distribute the *Neighborhood Information Profiles*, a series of five page feature stories describing a New York City neighborhood in text and photographs. Since its founding, Big Apple Greeter — a free public service — has welcomed over 50,000 visitors and been featured in hundreds of newspapers, magazines, television and radio programs all over the world, reaching an audience exceeding one billion potential visitors to New York City.

Big Apple Greeter is proud of its affiliation with NYC & Company and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

You may learn more about Big Apple Greeter and its many services on our website: www.bigapplegreeter.org or by emailing us at information@bigapplegreeter.org.

Big Apple Greeter welcomes you to New York.

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