



See the sights – and Amy Schumer (below) perform – in the city that never sleeps

City slicker

Follow the stars and head to New York for the trip of a lifetime

There aren't many places in the world like New York. They say it's the city that never sleeps – and there is so much to do there you'll want to stay awake. It's packed with iconic hotspots made famous in films, but there are also plenty of hidden gems. And with budget airline Wow offering one-way flights for just over £125, a trip there doesn't need to break the bank.

WHERE CAN I STAY?

The Roger Smith hotel (rogersmith.com) is perfectly located to explore Manhattan. It's walking distance from Times Square, the Rockefeller Center, Grand Central Terminal, Broadway and Central Park.

It boasts a traditional design that makes it feel like home from home. But it's packed with modern amenities. All rooms have an iPod docking station to play music, cable TV, a fridge and free Wi-Fi. There are also designer toiletries by Beekman 1802.

Guests can order room service from a range of local restaurants and charge it to their bill. And for breakfast there's unlimited granola and Greek yoghurt.



A typical room in the homely Roger Smith hotel

Roger Smith also has a real gem – its rooftop bar, Henry's, on the 16th floor, that's open in the warmer months.

WHERE CAN I EAT?

For a meal packed with atmosphere, head to the Hard Rock Cafe (hardrock.com) in the heart of Times Square. There's rock music playing and a real party atmosphere – with opening hours until 1.30am at weekends. The menu is packed with tempting American dishes but the real draw is the amazing memorabilia at every turn. So this is a must for fans of John Lennon, Jimi Hendrix and Bruce Springsteen.

Another great spot for dinner is Strip House Midtown (striphouse.com) – an iconic steak restaurant in the heart of Manhattan. It has a chic nightlife-inspired decor, superb service and a menu packed with every kind of steak you could want, from filet mignon to a rib-eye and a dry-aged porterhouse for two, all with its trademark pepper coating. This place is also famed for its incredible 24-layer chocolate cake.

WHICH CELEBRITIES WILL I SEE?

Some of Hollywood's biggest stars have been in shows on Broadway. In recent months, the likes of Bette Midler and Amy Schumer have been treading the boards. Lots of TV chat shows are filmed in New York, too, hosted by comics including Seth Meyers, Trevor Noah and Jimmy Fallon. Audience tickets are usually free but you need to apply months in advance.

WHERE CAN I RELAX?

The plush Oasis Day Spa (oasisdayspanyc.com), located in the centre of Manhattan at One Park Avenue, feels a world away from the hustle and bustle of New York. The extensive menu of massages includes aromatherapy, lava stone, sports, deep-tissue and Swedish, with prices starting at around £90.

We tried the muscle meltdown massage which lasts 60 minutes and leaves you feeling fully rejuvenated. And after you're done you can enjoy access to the sauna.

WHAT ABOUT THE NIGHTLIFE?

Bar SixtyFive (rainbow room.com) has got to be one of the best bars in the world. Situated on the 65th floor of the Rockefeller Center, it boasts eye-popping views across New York in three directions – including an uninterrupted view of the Empire State Building. There's an extensive champagne and

cocktail list including five signatures themed around New York's five boroughs. And despite being such a sensational venue, cocktails are reasonable at around £13.

Another great place for a few drinks is the Upstairs bar (upstairsnyc.com) on the 30th floor of the Kimberly hotel. It has views of the beautiful Chrysler Building

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

The Chamber Magic show (chambermagic.com) starring Steve Cohen is unmissable. He puts on five shows every weekend that feature jaw-dropping conjuring, mind-reading and sleight of hand. The highlight is the incredible Think-A-Drink stunt that sees Steve ask audience members to name their favourite tippie before producing it from a kettle. We were left speechless.

The show plays to an audience of just 60 guests, meaning everyone can see the tricks with their own eyes – there are no screens. And the surrounding at the gorgeous Lotte New York Palace hotel gives the show an old-fashioned glamour. Tickets start at around £90, but we think it's worth it.



Hang out in Times Square



Don't miss Steve Cohen's magic show



Bar SixtyFive has amazing views of the city

A bus tour is the perfect way to see a lot of New York in just a few hours. On Location Tours (onlocationtours.com) runs excursions themed around films and TV shows. There are hotspots at every turn and a tour guide is on hand with plenty of info and even some gossip.

The Super Tour OF NYC includes 40 comic-book sites where films including *X-Men* and *The Avengers* were filmed. It runs every Saturday and Sunday with tickets at around £36.

If you're away with friends then escape room challenge Clue Chase is worth a look (cluechase.com). Groups of up to 14 race against the clock to find clues, collect hidden items, solve puzzles and escape. We tried the Ultimate Heist game and it was so much fun the time whizzed by.

Another good idea is the New York CityPASS (nycgo.com), which costs less than £100 for adults and gives you access to six iconic attractions including the Empire State Building and the Guggenheim Museum.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Wow Air operates daily from London Gatwick to New York (Newark Airport) via Reykjavik with one-way tickets from £125.99 on the basic package. The airline, which launched in 2011, offers transatlantic flying on a budget and currently has routes out of Gatwick and Edinburgh. Passengers can upgrade to Wow Plus and Wow Biz for extra benefits. To book, visit wowair.co.uk or phone 0118 321 8384.

Roger Smith hotel (rogersmith.com) has rooms starting at £129 per night.



This former church building has been tastefully converted into seven individual apartments



The one-bedroom Liberty apartment

Enjoy the high life for a weekend in these luxurious serviced apartments

with subtle nods to the capital including a contemporary picture of the Queen in the living room and Union Jack cushions. The two grand bedrooms are huge, with luxurious furnishings throughout and 48in 4k TVs with Freeview and Netflix. In the smaller of the two bedrooms, there's a wrought-iron winding staircase leading to a telescope which you can use to explore the sky above the Minster. Both the bedrooms have en-suites with walk-in showers and mood lighting, as well as the most extensive range of posh Molton Brown toiletries we've ever seen! The open-plan kitchen, dining area and living room offers panoramic views of the church and city, and is equipped with everything you could need, including a washing machine and dryer, dishwasher, Nespresso machine and 58in TV 4k TV. We soon had ourselves hooked up to the Sonos soundbar, dancing around to old-school classics.

Restaurants and bars:

OK, so we had to make our own breakfast, but it meant we weren't forced to drag ourselves down to a dining area surrounded by other guests before 10am, and we loved our morning coffee on one of the two balconies. There's a relaxed pub next door, The Lamb & Flag, which serves food, or hit the city centre for anything you fancy.

Fact file:

Apartments at The Bells start from £195 per night.



One of the super king-sized bedrooms



The open-plan living area in Big Ben...



... leads on to the well-equipped kitchen