

JAMAICABLUE EX-PAT TALES

By John Burfitt

24 Hours in New York

Living in New York had always been a dream of Carmel Melouney. Now based in Manhattan, Carmel admits she loves living her dream.



Carmel Melouney in the middle of New York peak hour

“WEAR COMFORTABLE SHOES, AS YOU WALK EVERYWHERE IN NEW YORK. MY FIRST FEW TIMES HERE, MY EYES WERE WIDER THAN MY FEET COULD CARRY ME. AND I WAS IN PAIN FOR DAYS!”

TIP #1 FROM CARMEL

OUR EX-PAT TOUR GUIDE

Name: Carmel Melouney

Age: 28

Occupation: Reporter / Producer, The Daily

Originally from: Melbourne

Moved to New York: July 2010

“I always had a dream to live here. In July last year, I quit my job in Sydney, and then spent three months knocking on doors in New York trying to get a job. And I knocked on a lot of doors! Then News was launching The Daily, and I was lucky as they were having a recruitment drive. I have been here ever since – and it is everything I hoped it would be.”

WHERE TO STAY

On the Upper West Side and only blocks away from Central Park, the Beacon Hotel is a great central spot to embark on adventures through the Big Apple. Unlike most New York hotels, each room has its own kitchenette, and a Red Line subway is only two blocks away. “I always tell friends to stay somewhere they are comfortable and that is close to everything,” Carmel says. Rates begin from \$US235.

www.beaconhotel.com

WALKING THE PARK

Just blocks from the Beacon is the 341 hectare Central Park. “Walking through the park is such a good way to start the day,” Carmel says. “It is spectacular, and one of my favourite places to walk around is around the reservoir. The view of the skyline poking above the trees is amazing. Sometimes, I stop myself, look around and realise I am living the dream.”

www.centralpark.com



New York's iconic Central Park

BRUNCH

“Not too many people do breakfast in New York – they are either too busy or sleeping in,” Carmel laughs. She suggests a trip downtown to the East Village to the Moroccan-themed Café Mogador. “It is the hip place to hang out, and you can have Eggs Benedict, coffee and toast for about \$13. The good thing about New York is you can eat well here and it does not cost a fortune.” If you would like an order of star spotting with your eggs, Anne Hathaway is a regular here.

www.cafemogador.com

MID-MORNING CULTURE

“You need to go one of the galleries,” Carmel insists. She suggests either the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Guggenheim Museum or the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). “The Guggenheim is a good one – just walk up that spiral staircase as slowly as you desire,” she says. “Or head to the MOMA, as there is always something different there – like a helicopter hanging from the roof!”

www.guggenheim.org

www.moma.org

DEPARTMENT STORE NIRVANA

See how the other half shops at Barneys department store. “This is my favourite New York department store, as it is the smallest and most manageable, but it has such a great collection of designer everything,” Carmel says. While browsing the racks, keep one eye out for the likes of Anna Wintour and her Vogue chiefs who are regulars in the store. “It is all so beautiful and elegant,” Carmel adds.

www.barneys.com



Times Square

LUNCH

Only a short walk from Barneys and located inside the Neue Gallery is Café Sabarsky, which is styled like a traditional Viennese café. “Just grab a simple salad or a sandwich, to be sure you leave room for the desserts as they are amazing,” Carmel says. “My favourite is the Sabarsky Torte, which is a chocolate hazelnut delight.”

www.cafesabarsky.com

RETAIL THERAPY

Time to work off that rich lunch, so jump on a subway and head downtown to the Soho area for the full range of New York retail – from vintage delights to designer brands. “The thing my friends love about this area is they have stores we don’t have in Australia like H&M, where you can pick up some great pieces,” Carmel says.

www.sohonyc.com

LADY LIBERTY

At Battery Park, ferries take off for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. “You have to see the Statue of Liberty – she is the icon of New York,” Carmel says. “If the lines for the statue are too long, then jump on a ferry that goes around the harbour – the view is amazing.”

www.nps.gov

TIMES SQUARE & BROADWAY

“Seeing a Broadway show is something everyone should do in New York,” Carmel says. Head to Times Square, and go to the TKTS Booth for half-price tickets. “You can turn up last minute, grab tickets to a show and save a lot of money,” she adds. “And try for something different – it might be a real treat and well worth seeing it.”

www.tdf.org



Beacon Hotel

“IF YOU SEE SOMETHING IS ONLY 20 BLOCKS AWAY ON THE MAP, WALK IT INSTEAD OF USING THE SUBWAY. YOU WILL SEE SO MUCH MORE OF THE CITY IN THAT TIME.”

TIP #2 FROM CARMEL

AFTER SHOW DINNER & DRINKS

Once the curtain comes down, it’s time for late-night dinner and drinks. The Darby in the West Village is where Carmel likes to head. “It has an old world glamour about it, and they serve dinner until midnight as well as having a good cocktail menu,” she says. Another favourite is the Ace Hotel in Midtown. “A great place to wind up the day with a drink, or even a late-night coffee – and it is very good here.”

www.acehotel.com

www.thedarbynyc.com



Getting there:

Qantas flies direct into New York. Return fares start from \$1744 until the end of March.