



KATZ'S DELICATESSEN

New York's quintessential deli was established in 1888, at a time when the Lower East Side was an enclave of Jewish European immigrants hungry for a taste of the old country. Today, the lunchtime lines and celebrity photos plastering the walls are proof of the restaurant's continuing popularity. The towering sandwiches are the *raison d'être* but aren't for the faint of heart – a hand-sliced pastrami on rye with mustard and pickles will set you back \$20, and requires two people to devour. Whatever you do, don't misplace the ticket you're handed upon entry. You'll need it to order food at the counter and to settle your bill on your way out; lose it and you'll be slapped with a \$50 fee.

205 East Houston Street, New York.
See katzsdelicatessen.com.



CARNEGIE DELI

Named after nearby Carnegie Hall, this long-standing establishment is almost as famous as its namesake, especially with tourists. Which means you can expect to wait for a table even at off-peak times. Carnegie is known primarily for its house-baked cheesecakes and absurdly large sandwiches which require deconstruction before a bite can be attempted. (And also for siphoning cooking gas, an embarrassing revelation that caused it to shut down for most of 2015). The menu prices might seem ridiculous at first – a corned-beef-and-pastrami Woody Allen sandwich or a reuben will lighten your wallet in the order of \$30 – but they make more sense once you see the plates. Each of the monstrous sandwiches can feed three people, as well as provide an incredible “only in America” souvenir photo. 854 Seventh Avenue, New York.

See carnegiedeli.com.



RUSS AND DAUGHTERS

The original appetising counter is located just a few blocks away from Katz's Delicatessen, and is an equally venerated Lower East Side institution. Two years ago it celebrated its centenary by opening a full-service cafe around the corner. Russ & Daughters Cafe offers the same smoked fish, herring, bagels and caviar you can buy at the store, plus several brunch-friendly egg dishes that explain why the place is always chock-a-block. If you can't snag a table, opt for a takeaway bagel from the shop where you can watch staff hand-slice your nova or gravlax to order. Russ & Daughters just opened another restaurant and take-out counter, suitably located at the Jewish Museum. Cafe: 127 Orchard Street, New York; store: 179 East Houston Street, New York, 10002. Jewish Museum: 1109 Fifth Avenue, New York.
See russanddaughters.com.

Six of the Best



By Sarah Theeboom

Photos: Alamy, David Verdini, Paul Wagtuicz

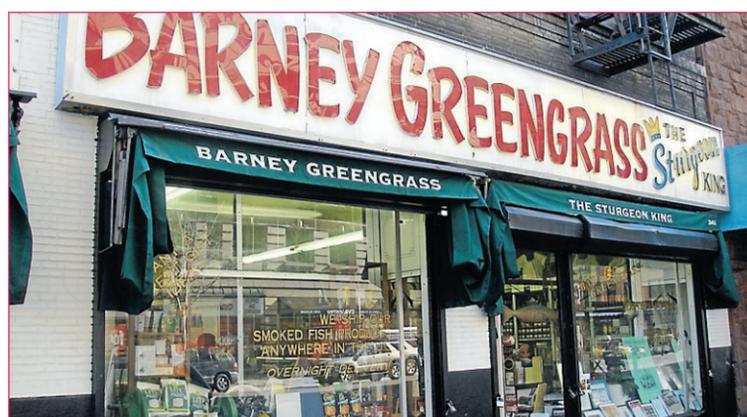
Sarah Theeboom travelled at her own expense.



2ND AVENUE DELI

Although it's no longer located on Second Avenue, this fully kosher deli clings proudly to its heritage, which may account in part for all the Yiddish on the menu: cholent, kreplach, matzoh brei, gribenes, rugelach and so on. If it's all Greek to you, this is stomach-sticking, artery-clogging, Central and Eastern European Jewish cooking. The lightest thing to pass your lips will probably be the complimentary shot of egg cream (a soda water-based chocolate milkshake) that arrives at the end of your meal. If you grew up with chopped liver, gefilte fish and stuffed cabbage then Second Avenue will send you into nostalgic reveries. If not, you can always play it safe with more standard deli fare such as corned beef and brisket. 162 East 33rd Street, New York.

See 2ndavedeli.com.



BARNEY GREENGRASS

New York's Jewish nosheries fall into two categories: delicatessens (for meat) and appetising shops (for fish, dairy, salads and so on). The division stems from the kosher dictum to separate milk and meat, although these days most restaurants are “kosher style” and offer a bit of both. But for a truly authentic bagel and lox with a fat schmear of cream cheese, it's best to go to an expert appetiser like this one, which has been dealing in smoked fish for over a century. Sturgeon is their (rather pricey) specialty but you'll also find whitefish, sable, herring and various types of smoked and cured salmon. The shareable platters are the best way to try several of them at once, either on bagels or on their more pliable Polish cousins, bialys. 541 Amsterdam Avenue, New York.

See barneygreengrass.com.



FRANKEL'S DELICATESSEN AND APPETIZING

Zach and Alex Frankel (the singer from the band Holy Ghost!) opened this hip eatery in April, reportedly to bring a taste of classic Manhattan appetising to Brooklyn. The minimal white-tiled interior is reminiscent of Russ and Daughters, and the decor is studiously retro down to the framed black and white barmitzvah photos on the wall. On the menu, a “Recession Special” of two franks and a soft drink references another Manhattan stalwart – Gray's Papaya, a late-night hot dog joint that has been offering the same deal for more than two decades. The menu covers all the requisite Jewish soul food standards such as smoked fish, potato latkes, brisket and matzo ball soup. There is, however, one curveball: the option to add bacon to your breakfast sandwich.
631 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn.
See frankelsdelicatessen.com.