



In the higgledy-piggledy maze of streets that makes up the delightful confusion of Greenwich Village, it's the solidity of Washington Square's triumphal arch that marks the district in people's minds. The arch commemorates George Washington's inauguration as the first president, and freedom from colonial rule. From the arch, you'll spend between 2 1/2 to 3 hours walking through some of the most picturesque streets and popping into a few of our many favorite stores.

The Village is one of the few parts of New York City in which it's possible to get lost. Don't worry if you do, you'll soon find your way out. If you become hopelessly turned around, remember that directory assistance is helpful for more than telephone numbers. If you're meeting someone, or trying to find a particular store or restaurant, dial 411 from any pay phone and ask for the street address. It won't cost you a penny.

1 Washington Square Park

Washington Square functions as a village playground: chess players, skateboarders, performance artists, there's always something to see. Both the original 1889 wooden arch and the current marble replacement were designed by Stanford White, one of the city's most famous architects and a native of the Village. Note the elm tree in the north-east corner. It is possibly the oldest tree in Manhattan (well over 300 years), and the local executioner found its branches ideal for hangings between 1797 and 1819.

Washington Mews

Glance along here on your way north up University Place. These were the stables for the pretty Greek Revival houses along the northern side of the park.

2 Untitled

26 W.8th Street (betw. 5th and 6th Aves.)
Tel: 212-505-9725

Eighth Street has a number of edgy shoe and fashion shops. Poke around for something daring. This shop includes some top international names as well as local favorites.

3 C. O. Bigelow Chemists

414 6th Avenue (betw. W.8th and W.9th Sts.)
Tel: 212-533-2700

You don't have to have jet-lag or stomach upset to come here (though the staff would be very helpful if you did). The shop is full of charm and they even have their own highly praised line of cosmetics æ pretty unique gifts for friends back home.

4 Balducci's

424 6th Avenue (at W.9th St.)
Tel: 212-673-2600

Despite the crowds and the New York crush, this is an institution you definitely do want to be locked up in. One of the city's best food shops and a riot of smells, colors and, of course, tastes.

Patchin Place

Cross Sixth Avenue at West 10th Street and follow West 10th as it angles south. Glance up Patchin Place on your right — a tiny street of just 10 houses. No. 4 was home to poet e.e. cummings for 40 years.

5 Three Lives Bookstore

154 W.10th Street (at Waverly Pl.)
Tel: 212-741-2069

Everything a book shop should be. A great selection, a knowledgeable staff and an atmosphere that encourages you to browse. Find a novel set in the neighborhood.

6 Aedes de Venustas

Downstairs at 15 Christopher St. (betw. 6th and 7th Aves.)
Tel: 212-206-8674

Have the folks in this jewel box perfume boutique help choose a scent that is truly you, a statement of your individuality — tomato leaf, perhaps? Very Village!

Take a tiny detour through Gay Street, New York's second shortest Street (after nearby Weehawken Street). As you exit on to Waverly Place turn right and look at the street sign. You're at the cross streets of Waverly Place and Waverly Place — what a tangle!

St. Luke-in-the-Fields

Head along Christopher Street's bustle to quiet Bedford Street. Note the wood-frame house on the corner of Grove Street, perhaps the best preserved in Manhattan. If you take a step down Grove Street towards Hudson Street, you will see St. Luke-in-the-Fields (1822) whose first warden, Clement Clarke Moore, wrote a poem for his children: " 'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house...."

75 1/2 Bedford Street

Stepping back into Bedford Street you will find the city's narrowest house. Number 75 1/2 is just 9 1/2 feet wide. Some say its neighbor, at number 77, is the oldest Greenwich Village house still standing.

Commerce Street and The Cherry Lane Theater

38 Commerce Street
Tel: 212-727-3673

This backwater, where Barrow meets Commerce Street, is one of the most nostalgic parts of the Village. There's even a gaslight burning at the street's elbow. The Cherry Lane Theater just beyond the bend has hosted many a star. One actor who did not perform there but lived in a bachelor pad above the theater in the 1920s was Archie Leach — he later became much better known as Cary Grant.

7 Chumley's

86 Bedford Street (off 7th Ave.)
Tel: 212-675-4449

Depending on the time of day, this is an atmospheric lunch or casual dining spot. The fact that you won't find it's name outside hints at its past. Certainly, the interior has hardly changed at all since 1928, when it began life as a speakeasy. It's also served as a drinking club for dozens of writers including Hemingway, Steinbeck, Faulkner. Spot the wall-mounted dust jackets that Lee Chumley encouraged authors to bring him.