

# Brooklyn: The New Global Destination For Expats Seeking A Vibrant New York Lifestyle



For years, international transplants moving to New York set their sights on Manhattan. But today, Brooklyn is emerging as the borough of choice for expats looking for a living destination that blends urban energy with a more relaxed, community-driven lifestyle. From Greenpoint's European-style cafés to Windsor Terrace's village-like charm, Brooklyn's diverse neighborhoods are drawing newcomers with their cultural vibrancy, access to green spaces, and dynamic food scenes—offering a lifestyle that mirrors some of the world's most beloved cities. “People used to move to Brooklyn because it was affordable, but now it's where they want to go first,” says Sara Kennedy, an agent at Douglas Elliman. “It wasn't too long ago that I had to explain to clients from overseas where Brooklyn even was—now it's at the top of their list.”

Whether arriving from Zurich, London, or Toronto, expats are choosing Brooklyn not just for its real estate but for its destination-worthy appeal—one that seamlessly blends local authenticity with international influence.

Kate McKiernan, 32, who works in the sports media industry, and her husband, Jack Morton Murray, 33, an architect, are one example and moved into a two-bedroom walkup rental in Greenpoint in late November. The couple were transferred to the city from Toronto for their jobs and sought to live in an area that offered a sense of serenity. McKiernan said they discovered the neighborhood on a recent trip to New York when they visited a friend who lives there. “We were instantly drawn to Greenpoint when we found out we had to move,” she says. “We love how it's less chaotic than Manhattan and a place where we can take walks in beautiful parks without so much noise.”

Like McKiernan, it's lifestyle- not necessarily price- that draws the international set to Brooklyn, according to JR Sena, a managing director at Compass Development Marketing Group, the exclusive leasing and marketing partner for The Dupont, a new luxury rental along Greenpoint's waterfront. “Areas in Brooklyn like Greenpoint, Prospect Park, and Gowanus are incredibly attractive to individuals looking for neighborhoods with a strong sense of community, noteworthy eateries, and an authentic streetscape with locally owned businesses that mirrors locations abroad and across the US,” he says.

The spate of new luxury developments with amenities galore and notable design is also a factor, he says. He references The Dupont, developed by the Rockefeller Group in partnership with the Park Tower Group. The 381-unit building features interiors designed by the renowned firm Workstead and amenities such as a rooftop clubhouse with a heated outdoor pool and sundeck overlooking the East River and Manhattan skyline, a garden-level social lounge, a coworking space with a conference and meeting rooms, and craft and gaming rooms. Alexander Lanaras, 37, and his wife, Christine Peter, also 37, arrived in New York from Zurich in September because of his job in the watch industry and are renting a three-bedroom apartment at The Dupont. Lanaras says he had never been to Brooklyn on his many visits to the city over the years and knew little about it.



The lake in Prospect Park. COURTESY OF ONE PARK POINT.

Another reason Lanaras and his wife love Greenpoint? The restaurant scene. Per Lanaras, he and his wife are passionate food lovers and one of their favorite parts about the neighborhood is exploring its vibrant restaurant scene. Just a few months into their lease and they already have a handful of favorites and recommendations for other new residents, both from abroad and in the US. “I originally looked at apartments in Manhattan near my office, but colleagues kept telling me how great Brooklyn was,” he says. “We started looking at places here in different neighborhoods and landed on Greenpoint because the low-rise buildings, smaller scale, the interesting architecture, and the neighborhood vibe with lots of great restaurants and cafes reminded me of Zurich.” The Dupont’s spacious apartments, amenities, and proximity to the water further helped make the decision to call Greenpoint home “an easy one,” Lanaras says. “I’m especially looking forward to the rooftop pool,” he says.

For lobster rolls, they recommend heading to Greenpoint Fish & Lobster, a longtime neighborhood favorite; Thai restaurant Little Tiffin offers their favorite take on Pad See Ew and local cafe Bakeri is their must-go for all things bread, pastry and breakfast. When in need of a nightcap or an aperitivo, he and his wife venture to Bar Americano for a well-crafted Americano or Negroni Sbagliato. Further south near Prospect Park, the luxury rental One Park Point has seen numerous international tenants since leasing launched in June, according to Bobby Dweck, principal at Focus Property Group, the building’s developer. Case in point: Cliodhna Burke, 34, and her husband, Mark Coleman, 41, moved into a two-bedroom apartment in the building in October. They relocated to New York from London in October because Burke was transferred to the city for her financial services job.

“We lived in North London, which is very green and feels like a village, and we love the greenspace that Prospect Park gives us,” Burke says. Coleman, a personal trainer, is a fan of One Park Point’s expansive gym and appreciates the building’s convenient location. Burke too appreciates the fitness center, though also has created another fitness home-away-from home at nearby Windsor Terrace Martial Arts, a local martial arts gym offering cardio kickboxing, ju jitsu and kids classes. To further up the activity levels, both love crossing the street to Prospect Park for its plethora of running, walking and cycling trails. It is their favorite green space and a top recommendation for those visiting Brooklyn and the neighborhood.

As an expat, it’s always important to have the place one harkens when the inevitable homesick pangs kick in. For Burke and Coleman, The Highbury Pub is the perfect place when they’re craving a bit of London and Premier League football. Beyond its appeal to expats, Brooklyn has also solidified itself as a must-visit destination for travelers looking to experience a different side of New York City. With its eclectic mix of historic brownstones, world-class restaurants, and buzzing creative scene, the borough offers an authentic and dynamic alternative to Manhattan.

In the past, visitors have flocked to more established neighborhoods like Williamsburg and DUMBO. Today, it’s a different scene: emerging areas like Greenpoint and Windsor Terrace are capturing some of these tourism dollars thanks to the international renters opting to put down roots in the areas. For both those visiting as well as those making a home here, the borough’s waterfront areas, expansive green spaces and thriving art and food scenes, the latter of which is a major draw with its Michelin-starred restaurants, beloved local bakeries and globally inspired eateries. Whether exploring the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, catching a concert at the Barclays Center, or discovering hidden cocktail bars, tourists—both international and domestic—are increasingly making Brooklyn a key part of their New York itineraries.

## The Best of Brooklyn

Considering a move stateside to New York City? Read on for Alexander Lanaras and his wife’s Greenpoint favorites, as well as Cliodhna and Mark’s can’t miss Brooklyn moments:

### Alexander Lanaras and Christine Peter:

#### Can’t miss restaurants:

- **Greenpoint Fish & Lobster** for their amazing lobster rolls
- **Little Tiffin** for the delicious pad see ew,
- **Verge Sushi** for the best sushi
- **Leroy** for the burger
- **Bakeri** for all things bread, pastry & breakfast

**Best Bar:** Bar Americano. There’s truly nothing better than savoring a well-crafted Americano or a Negroni Sbagliato.

**Favorite green space:** It’s wonderful to have such close access to the water—whether it’s right in front of our building, a bit further down in Williamsburg, or along the scenic paths in Brooklyn Heights. It’s one of the things we appreciate most about living here.

**Go-To Brooklyn Activity:** Enjoying a cappuccino at places like Rhythm & Zero or Café Alula

**Best place when home-sick:** Lanaras holds dual citizenship in Greece and Switzerland. Whenever I feel a bit homesick, we love indulging in the wonderful Greek cuisine on offer here. We also really appreciate the Greek products available at the supermarkets in Astoria—they’re a true treasure trove for a taste of home.

**Any other must-know’s:** The cultural scene in NYC is truly incredible! It’s great to diving into it. We just booked the "40 Under 40" program at the Met Opera and really look forward to it.

### Cliodhna Burke and Mark Coleman

- **Favorite restaurant + dish:** Electric Beets on 7th Avenue. It’s an amazing plant based deli, great for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Best dish - the lasagne!
- **Favorite bar:** Wheated on Church Avenue. It’s cosy with great pizza, including vegan options.
- **Favorite fitness experience:** No question, Windsor Terrace Martial Arts. It’s a fantastic local martial arts gym offering cardio kickboxing, ju jitsu and kids classes. Everyone is friendly and it’s a great spot to get fit and learn new skills, plus they offer a free trial class to test their offerings.
- **Best Green space:** Prospect Park! We're so fortunate to live across from the park. It has amazing walks, running and cycling tracks and so much nature to explore.
- **Go-To Brooklyn Activity:** Exploring new coffee shops with our books, which brings us to new areas in the borough all the time. A great find was Principles GI Coffee House on 9th Street in Gowanus.
- **Best Place when Homesick:** The Highbury Pub, which airs Premier League football!