

# Union Square, Flatiron District & Gramercy

## Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Mentally configuring your fantasy loft while perusing floor after floor of wildly priced home goods at uber-gorgeous **ABC Carpet & Home** (p172).
- 2 Prodding fresh produce and sampling artisan treats at the **Union Square Greenmarket** (p173), which

transforms into a delightful Christmas market.

- 3 Slurping craft brews at Eataly's secret beer garden, **Birreria** (p170), high up among the Flatiron District's clock towers.
- 4 Walking square around elegant **Gramercy Park**,

enjoying one of the city's most intimate urban moments.

- 5 Snacking on coveted **Shake Shack** (p166) burgers and taking in art installations in leafy Madison Square Park.



For more detail of this area see Map p424 →

## Explore Union Square, Flatiron District & Gramercy

Union Square unifies many disparate parts of the city, acting as the veritable urban glue linking unlikely cousins. Some may criticize the area for not having a distinct personality of its own, but upon closer inspection, Union Square and the Flatiron District borrow rather cautiously and selectively from their neighbors.

There's not a lot of ground to cover, so the best plan of attack is to use the two major public spaces – Union Square and Madison Square Park – as your anchors. From Union Square you'll feel the Village vibe spilling over with the likes of quirky cafes, funky store fronts and dreadlocked buskers in the square itself. Up towards 23rd St you'll find the namesake Flatiron Building looming over the commercial quarter, replete with crowded lunch spots and after-work watering holes. East of both public spaces is Gramercy, its distinctly residential vibe tempered with buzzing restaurants.

### Local Life

- **Mad Sq Eats** Each spring and fall, foodies flock to tiny General Worth Square – wedged between Fifth Ave and Broadway, opposite Madison Square Park – for **Mad Sq Eats** (Map p424; [www.madisonsquarepark.org/tag/mad-sq-eats](http://www.madisonsquarepark.org/tag/mad-sq-eats); General Worth Sq; 5 N/R, F/M, 6 to 23rd St), a month-long culinary pop-up market. Its 30 or so vendors include some of the city's hottest eateries, cooking up anything from proper pizza to brisket tacos using top local produce.
- **Gourmet groceries** Eataly (p172) had made a name for itself as the place to go for Italophile food buffs, but locals do much more of their everyday shopping at health-conscious supermarket Whole Foods (p173).

### Getting There & Away

- **Subway** A slew of subway lines converge below Union Square, shuttling passengers up Manhattan's East Side on the 4/5/6 lines, straight across to Williamsburg on the L, or up and over to Queens on the N/Q/R lines. The L also travels across to the West Side, although when there's no traffic it costs about the same to take a cab (if you're two or more people). Take the Q for an express link up to Herald Square and Times Square.
- **Bus** The M14 and the M23 provide cross-town service along 14th St and 23rd St respectively. Go for the bus over the subway if you're traveling between two eastern points in Manhattan – it's not worth traveling over to Union Square to walk back to First Ave.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Human traffic can be overwhelming in Union Square, especially along 14th St. If you're in a rush, or trying to hoof it on foot, then switch over to 13th St and you'll cover a lot more ground in much less time.

### Best Places to Eat

- Eleven Madison Park (p167)
- Maialino (p167)
- ABC Kitchen (p170)
- Ess-a-Bagel (p166)

For reviews, see p164 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- Birreria (p170)
- Flatiron Lounge (p170)
- Raines Law Room (p171)
- Beauty Bar (p171)
- Gramercy Tavern (p167)

For reviews, see p170 ➔

### Best Spots to Instagram

- The north side of Gramercy Park, looking up Lexington Ave toward the Chrysler Building
- Birreria (p170), from the roof deck
- The south side of Madison Square Park (p164) for a full-frontal of the Flatiron Building
- The stone steps on the southern end of Union Square (p162), capturing the ever-changing spectacle of protestors, buskers and general eccentrics

For reviews, see p164 ➔