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Voyager

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Editor's Note:

We are so excited to share the first Voyager edition of the year! As Horace Mann's travel and adventure publication, we hope that Voyager is a publication that every type of reader can relate to, learn from, and be inspired by. We believe it is important to show Horace Mann students' diverse and unique travel perspectives from across the globe to right down the street! In this issue, you will find articles sharing unique experiences from members of our community and providing inspiration for your next adventure!

We would like to thank everyone who helped Voyager get to this point. First, we need to thank Ms. Morales for her constant support and encouragement throughout this entire process. Voyager would not be possible without her. We also want to thank our entire editorial board for making the production of our issue so smooth. We appreciate your insight, support and enthusiasm! Finally, thank you to all of our staff writers who passionately shared their stories of adventure. We loved creating this issue and hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

— Emily Weidman, Rena Salsberg, and Tyler Rosenberg



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A TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO PARIS

ELLAH SIEGEL

This summer, I was fortunate enough to spend a month in my favorite city in the world, where every street corner whispers tales of romance, history, and the irresistible aroma of freshly baked baguettes, croissants, and macarons. On a summer program called Oxbridge in Paris, I was immediately immersed in the culture, cuisine, language, and rich history of this magical city. Consisting of 17 arrondissements, each district represents a new chapter waiting to be explored, each with its own culinary narrative and a distinct palette of tastes and aromas. From a mouthwatering, perfectly cooked Croque Monsieur at Montmartre to a classic French Nutella crepe at your local cafe or crepe stand, this traveler's guide is your passport to unleashing three of the endless hidden gems and flavors of this famous city.

During my stay in Paris, I was fortunate enough to stay in a building directly across from arguably one of the most beautiful spots in the city: the Luxembourg Gardens. Similar to Central Park – only 100 times cleaner and smaller – this park is spectacular and always filled with people. From the dazzling gardens, runners on the path, children playing in the fields, and ducks in the various ponds, the scene of this garden was straight out of a fairytale. My first trip to the garden was with my French class, where we were tasked with finding a few specific spots and learning the history behind them. In groups, we strolled around the garden in search of each location. After visiting almost every location on the list, our last stop was the local crepe stand. I was overjoyed to discover this unique spot and finally to be able to eat after a long hour of searching. I immediately placed an order for my go-to crepe: Nutella and banana. Taking a bite of this delicious treat was otherworldly and greatly exceeded my expectations. The pleasure of not only seeing it



made right in front of me but also having the privilege to engage in a discussion with the shop's owner, who had worked there for many years, made the experience all that much more personal and special. The perfectly paired flavors of the Nutella and fresh fruit, balanced with the crisp texture of the crepe itself, made each bite better than the one before. Compared to the 50 or so other crepe restaurants I tried during my stay in Paris, my experiences at the local crepe stands, which happened to be found on almost every other street, were undoubtedly my favorite.

The next stop you should take on this delightful journey is the 6th arrondissement's very own Le Relais de l'Entrecôte, extremely popular among the locals. This restaurant is to die for. You might be thinking, "Why

would I eat steak in Paris?" but this is not just any steak place. First of all, since it does not take reservations – possibly its only downside– there is always a line out the door and around the corner. However, after experiencing a wait time of close to an hour in that very line, I can say it is most definitely worth the wait. As someone who is the absolute worst at making decisions (I am by far the most indecisive person I know) the one-meal menu made the experience that much better. The menu consists of steak frites (steak with fries) as the main course, topped with a side of a simple walnut salad. The careful way in which the steak was prepared – medium rare –, the sauce that surrounded it, and the steak's combination with the french fries was possibly the best steak meal of my life. Overall, this restaurant is a must try, in my opinion!

The final stop of this traveler's guide was found in one of the most beautiful and historic spots of the city of Paris: Montmartre. Montmartre is essentially a small village on a hill in Paris's northern 18th arrondissement that overlooks the entire city. 130 meters high and a part of the Right Bank, Montmartre is primarily known for its artistic history, liveliness, the majestic Church of Sacre-Coeur, the color, and more – the list is endless. However, equally as exciting as the visual array of street art and the spectacular view of Paris were the countless



food stands and restaurants to dine at. Taking a train all the way across the city, followed by a tram ride up the hill, the long travels to make our way towards this area were most certainly worth it. Traveling with a group of my friends, we dined at what appeared to be the most popular restaurant of them all, located directly in the center of the artist's square. This restaurant was a traditional French restaurant called Au Clairon Des Chasseurs, and the vibe, the view, the food, and the live music made this lunch a very memorable experience. Starting off with a traditional French onion soup and ending with a classic Croque Monsieur as my main course, this meal was to die for, and I would 100% recommend it to anyone planning to take a trip to Paris in the future.



Overall, the meals I was fortunate enough to have, filled with culture, spirit, and overwhelmingly delicious flavors, was what completed and perfected my Parisian summer. I am confident that anyone who dines at a single one of these places will experience this contagious effect!

The Quality Food of Oxford, England

Sienna Tolani

Most known for its academics, cloudy weather, and Harry Potter, the small city of Oxford lies in the deep suburbs of England, about two hours outside of London. Full of students year-round, the college city is not often recognized for all it offers outside the realm of education. Though it is not as large and lively as London, it surely is one of the UK's more charming cities. This summer, I was fortunate enough to spend a month living in Oxford at Pembroke College and was able to explore the city in July. During this exploration alongside fellow peers, I discovered the various impeccable foods within Oxford. Ranging from hidden street stalls to rooftop restaurants, the city boasts a diverse range of food options which I took advantage of throughout my time there. In case you plan on spending your upcoming summer or break in Oxford, in this article I will be detailing my top, most delicious, picks across the town:



Sticks 'n' Sushi:

Asian fusion has always been my favorite cuisine; it is safe to say I am always up for some sushi or teriyaki. This summer, knowing Britain's lack of spicier foods, I pessimistically expected to encounter bland cuisine. However, a few days into my summerr program, my friends and I came upon the restaurant "Sticks 'n' Sushi," located on the rooftop of Westgate Mall on Queen St., a few minutes walking from Pembroke College. Thrilled to try fresh sushi in Oxford, I forced friends to accompany me to lunch at the restaurant. After my first meal there, I was instantly hooked, returning more than five times throughout the course of the month, and perfecting my order, by the end. The food was surprisingly tasty, the menu offering a variety of single dishes as well as sushi boats, package meals, and specialized signature "sticks" (miniature kebabs spiced, grilled, and bursting with flavor). The individual rolls were also unique, offering creative twists on traditional sushi. My



personal favorite was the miso shrimp tempura roll that came drenched in a thick sweet soy sauce and topped with bits of caviar. Out of the sticks, my go-to was the chili chicken, composed of chicken meatballs coated in spicy mayo and chili glaze. My final favorite from their menu was the broccoli. While this may sound like a questionable pick, I was truly shocked at how good their miso broccoli was, covered in several soys and salted to perfection.

Franco Manca:

Wandering through the streets of Oxford, my classmates and I were lucky enough to discover a pizza parlor close to our dorms: Franco Manca. Franco Manca became every student's Italian staple over the summer. My friends and I consistently returned to their sourdough pizzas, whether it was ordering them to our dorms after a long day of classes or enjoying them in the restaurant during our lunch breaks. Their pizzas come with a number of different topping styles; my recommendation being their truffle-mushroom pizza which is topped with mouth-watering globs of parmesan, mushroom, and truffle.



The Covered Market:

Another popular lunch spot amongst the student population in Oxford was the Covered Market. There are multiple entrances to the market, mostly on Market St. and scattered across alleyways which branch off of the more populated streets: High St. and Cornmarket St. Upon arrival, you enter into a series of narrow halls and are met with dozens of coffee shops and restaurants squeezed on either side of you. There is an assortment of foods, ranging from traditional Thai food to a ham and cheese baguette. I especially loved the sweet desserts in the market—some were truly the best treats I have ever eaten.

For instance, I often paid a visit to the Moo Moo's Milkshakes stall, situated toward the back of the market. Painted pink, Moo Moo's draws in customers with its



customizable milkshakes in which you can blend any candy, cereal, or cookie imaginable. Furthermore, Moo Moo's offers stamp cards where you can receive a stamp for every milkshake you purchase. After your seventh milkshake, you get one free! Other sweet highlights in the market

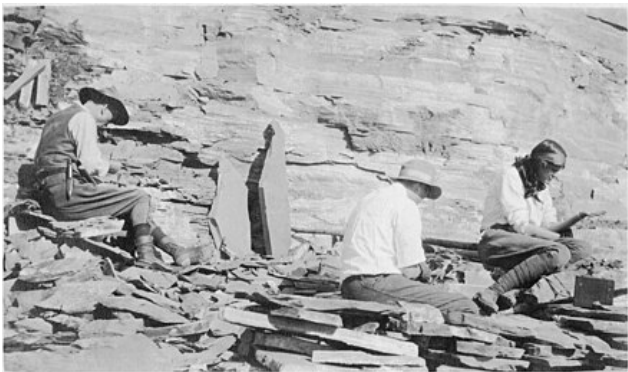
were Ben's Cookies and iScream. Ben's Cookies makes warm, gooey cookies that immediately melt in your mouth. At iScream, homemade, fruity gelato is swirled and served and is definitely better than anything I have found in the US. Although the weather in Oxford was typically cloudy and colder, I could never refuse iScream!

The city of Oxford quickly became one of my favorites, after I explored its winding streets and quaint cafes this summer. While I had low expectations for the food and culture of the city upon my arrival, my quality experiences dining in multiple of the renowned Oxford restaurants truly proved me wrong.

Leave No Stone Unturned: Fossil Hunting in British Columbia

David Aaron

The Burgess Shale, a rock quarry in British Columbia, boasts many fossils dating back to the dawn of animal life. To visit this geological treasure trove, you must book a tour in advance. The Burgess Shale is exceptionally well-preserved and protected. Hiking visitors are strictly prohibited from removing any fossils from the mountain face. To reach the quarry, one has to trek 5 miles of steep mountainous terrain; however, the destination is worth the journey. A Yoho National Park Visitor Center is situated at the foot of the mountain and marks the starting point of the hike. Before the climb, I recommend you take some time to learn about the rocks you will encounter. The information center holds an abundance of information



about this historical site.

The fossils found in the quarry are preserved imprints of living creatures that died and sunk to the ocean floor hundreds of millions of years ago. Most of the fossils in this site were living organisms that existed during the Cambrian Explosion, which took place from 541 to 485.4 million years ago. This era is known as the Cambrian Explosion, where life flourished and

evolved rapidly, leading to the emergence of most of the Earth's oldest fossils. Over 60,000 unique fossils have been identified at the Burgess Shale quarry. The most notable are Opanibia, Trilobites, Anomalocaris, and Hallucigenia. When I arrived at this quarry, I told my family my goal was to find an Anomalocaris fossil. This creature was the Earth's first superpredator. This species was dominant in the Cambrian seas as their numerous flaps made them adept swimmers. Their ability to hunt was enabled by their two talon-like appendages, each carrying multiple sharp spikes. After 15 minutes of rock-flipping, I was able to locate a fossil of the elusive Anomalocaris.

This site is protected by UNESCO, which is just one of 1,157 world heritage locations. These fossils are only observable to us due to a unique sequence of events that led to the death of these creatures in a way that permitted fossilization. Normally, when an organism dies, its remains are either consumed by other organisms or cemented into the muddy bottom of the ocean. This mud was compressed with calcium carbonate (limestone), which helped prevent living creatures from accessing the remains of these dead animals; therefore, they have remained intact. These creatures were entombed in an environment that destroyed their soft tissues; however, it preserved their mineralized tissues, such as teeth, bones, and exoskeletons. We can examine these fossils today because of tectonic movement. Tectonic shifts caused the Cambrian ocean floor to be

pushed up to higher elevations; additionally, glacial movements may have helped to expose these hidden rock imprints. This distinctive location was first discovered by Charles Walcott in 1909. Since then, nine more sites similar to the Burgess Shale have been recognized in Canada, China, the US, and Greenland. These sites are beneficial for providing more insight into animal lineages.

If you desire to see these remarkable fossils, you have a few options. The first option is the trail my family chose to endeavor. This choice involves a 5-mile hike (round trip) up steep terrain, with an elevation gain of 2,610 ft. Although it was a challenging 7-hour expedition, the nature accompanying you throughout is awe-inspiring. The second option offers a greater variety of fossil beds; however, it spans 14 miles (round trip) and takes up to 11 hours to complete. This trip entails a similar elevation gain of 2,710 ft but is less vertically demanding.

The trail becomes a time machine, allowing adventurers to connect with the ancient past and appreciate the intricate tapestry of life that has unfolded in British Columbia over millions of years. The beauty of hiking in this province is not just about the stunning scenery but also

anyone interested in geology, fossils, or breathtaking views.



the opportunity to tread upon the same earth that once cradled creatures now immortalized in stone.

I suggest adding this trip to your bucket list for

A Summer Adventure in Greece

Julia Eizenstat



If you're planning a trip to Greece this summer and looking to explore some of their beautiful islands, here are a few hidden adventures that will make your trip stand out. The Greek Islands

and mainland are the perfect destination for all ages, with breathtaking water, unique stores, culture, and historic sights.

This past summer, I began a three-week voyage across Greece in Sivota, a Mediterranean coastal gem in the region of Epirus, Greece. Sivota is considered one of the most exotic destinations on Mainland Greece, famous for its oceans and locally-owned shops. A great first exploration is a boat tour to Pisina Beach, also known as the Blue Lagoon, one of the most famous beaches in Sivota for its clear, turquoise water. Historians say the Arabian pirates moored their ships at this picturesque bay in the Middle Ages. I recommend making a pit stop at the stunning Cave of Sivota (Mourtos), where legend says a submarine



was hidden during World War II. Not only is Sivota a perfect way to spend your days on the inviting waters, but the neighboring village of Parga is equally as fun. Famous for its exotic beaches, stunning natural landscape, and traditional architecture, this village boasts a remarkable view of the Ionian Sea. Parga's Restaurant Trehantiri is a great meal to begin the trip, dining on authentic Greek cuisine. The tzatziki dip, zucchini balls, and mussels cooked with tomato sauce and feta cheese remain etched in my memory.

After spending a few days in the gorgeous water surrounded by the breathtaking sights in Sivota, a convenient two-hour bus ride is a perfect segway into Monodendri, a village in Central Zagoria that lies at an altitude of 1,060 meters. Monodendri is home to Vikos Gorge, one of the most spectacular canyons in Europe that contains one of the deepest gorges on the planet, nicknamed the Grand Canyon of Greece. The 13-kilometer trail along the Vikos Gorge hike is considered one of the best hikes in Greece, a wild adventure that combines man-made and natural wonders. Even shorter hikes through Vikos-Aoös National Park showcase part of the Pindus

mountain range, a string of cliffside monasteries, and ancient stone bridges. I strongly recommend the 2-hour, 8-kilometer trek that starts in Monodendri and ends in Koukouli, a Zagori village located at the southern end of the Vikos Gorge. Although it is a long hike, this trail revealed centuries of history, miles of captivating greenery, and jaw-dropping scenery. I urge you to stop for a few photos at Kokori's ancient bridge between Koukouli and Kipoi, another Zagori village once the center and capital of Zagori.



A great way to continue your trip is the one-hour bus ride



from Monodendri to

Konitsa, a town that lies

northeast of the group of Zagori villages. In Kinotsa, white-water rafting down the beautiful Aoois River is the best way to experience the only Greek river that flows outside Greece. The two-hour voyage across the river is an exhilarating adventure conducted by experienced and certified guides. The river is not challenging to navigate, and rapids varied between Classes 2-4 for most of the trip, so anyone aged 13 and up can take on this exciting ride. Another neighboring Greek village I highly recommend visiting is Papingo, which is only a forty-five-minute drive from Kinotsa. Papingo is perched on a mountainside near

the end of Vikos Gorge, located right outside the Vikos-Aoös National Park at an altitude of 900 meters. Papingo consists of two villages, Megalo Papingo and Mikro Papingo, or Greater Papingo and Lesser Papingo, which belong to the broader unit of villages in Zagori that are famous for their architecture of stone-made buildings and ancient stone-paved alleys. Between the big and small Papingo are natural rock pools, a testament to the beauty of Greece's natural architecture. A fifty-meter stone-paved path leads to these rock pools, a hidden paradise filled with small waterfalls and clear turquoise water.

Olympia is a must-see when in Greece and is roughly a five-hour drive from Papingo. The drive itself shows off Greece's natural beauty. Olympia is well known for being the birthplace of the most famous sporting events in the ancient world, home to the original Olympic Games. Olympia was also the center of worship of Zeus, the father of the twelve

Olympian gods, and contains the Temple of Zeus, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The neighboring Archaeological Museum of Olympia holds a collection of priceless artifacts that once decorated the sanctuary and date back thousands of years. Olympia is filled with a rich history representing nobility and the thrill of competition—ideals that continue today. This destination was definitely the warmest, so water, sunscreen, and sunglasses are necessary to make it through the day.

A perfect way to end a trip through Greece is in the beautiful Naxos, home to an array of long sandy beaches. The Temple of Apollo, massive door-like ruins of an ancient temple, stands proudly as the jewel of Naxos, overlooking the city and sea. The island was filled with mouthwatering restaurants, thrift and high-end clothing stores, and smaller antique shops. I highly advise dining at BACO seaside for a memorable lunch with an unobstructed view of the sparkling blue water. The delicious shrimp chorizo tacos and pork bao await a fifteen-minute stroll from the Temple of Apollo. After exploring the island into the evening, a great way to end the night is at the Waffle House, which is filled with a fantastic selection of ice cream flavors one can eat on its own or layer onto an already tasty waffle. The classic waffle with one scoop of stracciatella ice cream and whipped cream loaded on top is a dessert I can never forget. The next day in Naxos consisted of an underwater adventure learning how to scuba dive—an experience I consider the foremost highlight of my time in Greece.



The list of places to visit in Greece is extensive, but Sivota, Monodendri, Olympia, and Naxos are all must-see attractions that offer a variety of dazzling water, incredible sights, distinctive stores, and unique culture. For a break from the bustling city lights and fast-paced streets, consider visiting Greece and exploring the vast attractions the mainland and islands have to offer.

Treasures of Israel

Tessa Siegel

Israel is a popular travel destination full of extraordinary sites, religious centers, and incredible food. Israel is a small country located in the Middle East, surrounded by Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. It borders the Mediterranean Sea, the Negev Desert in the South, and Coastal Plains and Highlands in the North and Central Regions. Despite its small size, its beauty flourishes beyond measure.

Israel holds religious significance to many people, including people who practice Judaism, Christianity, Druidism and Islam. The city of Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, holds three of the most important sites for the Jewish, Islamic, and Christian religions. The Western Wall is the most sacred site in the Jewish faith. The Wall is the remains of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, which was held to be uniquely holy by the ancient Jews. The Wall is the holiest place for prayer in the Jewish religion, and many typical Jewish events are held there, such as Bar/Bat Mitzvahs and celebrations of religious holidays. The



Al-Aqsa Mosque compound (Masjid Al-Aqsa) is the third holiest site in Islam and the compound is held in esteem by the entire Muslim community, due to its history as a place of worship by many prophets such as Ibrahim (Abraham), Dawud (David), Sulaiman (Solomon), Ilyas (Elijah) and Isa (Jesus). The holy book of Quran talks about Masjid Al-Aqsa being the point of direction for praying, where all prayer in the religion is meant to face this Mosque. Lastly, for the Christian religion, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is a deeply religious site. Within this Church are the last Stations of the Cross including the place where Christ was crucified and Christ's burial tomb.

Israel contains lots of extraordinary sites due to its wild landscape and variety of living organisms. The most popular sites are the Dead Sea, the National Parks, and the many beautiful beaches along the coast. The Dead Sea is considered "the world's most ancient spa" as it is

one of the saltiest bodies of water in the world, with 34% salinity making it nearly nine times saltier than regular ocean water. As a result of the saltiness,



swimming in the Dead Sea is an exciting experience and when I visited I was able to float above the water. Additionally, the saltiness in water enhanced my skin making it feel soft and oily.

There are many beautiful National Parks all along Israel. The top national parks are the Masada, the Timna Park, and the Ein Gedi Nature Reserve all containing



their own unique features. The Masada is one of the greatest archaeological

sites containing a Mountain overlooking the Dead Sea. Masada is extremely high, and can be ascended on foot by the winding "snake path" or by a cable car that runs from the tourist center at the bottom of the mountain to the top.

Apart from its beauty, it contains a symbolic importance of determination and heroism which continues to this day with many Israeli soldiers sworn in there. Timna Park is a unique attraction with a majestic desert setting located in the South of Israel in the Negev Desert. Snaking across Timna Park are hiking trails short and long, for all levels of experience. It is home to a variety of wildlife consisting of plants and trees, and within the park is a small lake. In addition, there are numerous beautiful beaches all along the coast of Israel. The beaches contain light and clear blue waters with spectacular wildlife such as the common soft shelled turtles. Apart from the water, there are fun activities to participate in on the sand such as volleyball and a popular paddle ball game called kadima.

Lastly, the amazing food in Israel is a big part of the culture, and contains countless delicious restaurants. The food in Israel is Middle Eastern but with a touch of its own unique culture. Falafel

is probably the most recognizably Israeli food. In almost every town in Israel you can find many shops attracting the hungry with the delicious smell of frying falafels. Shakshuka is the most popular Israeli breakfast which is a dish consisting of eggs poached in a sauce of tomatoes, olive oil, peppers, onion, and garlic, commonly spiced with cumin, paprika and cayenne pepper. The Israeli Salad, a chopped salad of finely diced tomato, onion, cucumber, and bell or chili peppers, is very popular. It has been described as the "most well-known national dish of Israel," and is a standard accompaniment to most Israeli meals. Apart from specific foods, the street food in Israel is known to be one of the best in the world. There are markets such as the Yehuda and Carmel Markets which contain little shops of all types of Israeli food. These shops are appealing towards locals and visitors from their affordable pricing, and foods consisting of a variety of cultures throughout the Middle East.



Editor's Note: We would like to acknowledge that this article was written before October 7, 2023. We recognize that much has changed in the world and Israel since then. Tourism has changed in Israel, but we hope one day it will return to being the same and you can experience the beauties that Tessa describes.

Finì Pizza: The Best Slice in New York

Alex Leichter and Harry Lascher

This August, we spent the month working at a Finì Pizza. We prepared the slices, restocked the fridge, and folded pizza boxes during our shifts, but spent the most time operating the cash register. Given that the restaurant is mostly takeout, with a counter and stools, as opposed to waiters serving tables, we were typically the only employees to interact directly with the customers. Each day during our lunch breaks, we prepared ourselves a slice. Even after being surrounded by the aroma of fresh dough all day, we continuously craved Finì's pizza and highly recommend that people visit.



Finì Pizza has three locations -

Williamsburg, Amagansett, and their newest location, the Barclays Center. All locations serve their seven staple slices: white, grandma, sicilian, cheese, pepperoni, long hot shallot, and tomato. All of these slices are also available in the form of a pie, and there is even a gluten free option (if ordered three hours in advance.) Finì Pizza also offers caesar and arugula salads, as well as strawberry, melon, peanut butter, and lemon Italian ices.



Cheese Slice: All of the pizza at Finì is made fresh every day, with dough that is made at the Williamsburg location and then cold fermented overnight. They top the cheese slice with a San Marzano tomato sauce and low moisture and smoked mozzarella, then brush the crust with olive oil. The crust is charred, allowing each slice to have lots of sauce while remaining crispy. We highly recommend adding Finì heat to this slice for a

little kick and sweetness. The Finì heat is the house-made hot honey that is on the counters of the restaurant and is delicious on any slice. The cheese slice is amazing and we would recommend it to anyone who has never been to Finì before.

Pepperoni Slice: The pepperoni slice is the exact same as the cheese slice but topped with pepperoni. We are not pepperoni fans, so we don't love this slice. To us, the pepperoni slice is just a greasier version of the cheese slice, however, if you enjoy pepperoni, this is the slice for you.

Long Hot Shallot: The most frequently asked question at Fini is "What is the long hot shallot?" The Long Hot Shallot slice also uses a cheese slice as a base, but it is topped with shallots and long hot peppers. The long hot peppers give the pizza just a little bit of spice, while the sweet shallots balance it out. This slice is one of our favorites, and we like to top it with oregano and parmesan cheese.

White Pizza: The white slice is the most popular slice at Fini, and there's a good reason for that. In our opinion, the white slice is the best slice at Fini. It is topped with a fontina cheese sauce, as well as mozzarella, parmesan, and fontina cheese before being put in the oven. After cooking, it is topped with lemon zest and served with a lemon wedge to squeeze over the slice. The fontina sauce is super creamy, and the three cheeses and lemon give the pizza a sweet taste. This is our favorite slice, and is delicious with hot honey on top. A must-try, in our opinion.

Tomato Pie: The tomato pie is baked with just San Marzano tomato sauce but is topped with spicy Calabrian chili oil and crispy garlic bread crumbs after being baked. This has no cheese, which might not sound like it would be good, but we promise this is one of the best slices Fini has to offer. The slice is super crunchy and tastes amazing as is, but we like to top it with parmesan cheese.

Grandma: The grandma slice is one of two square slices, meaning that instead of being made with the regular dough, is baked on focaccia. Before being placed in the oven, the focaccia is topped with San Marzano tomato sauce, smoked mozzarella, and a mixture of garlic and chilies. After the pizza is taken out of the oven, it is cut into squares and then topped with parmesan, olive oil, and basil. The square slices are chewier than the regular slices, which makes the square slice less enjoyable to us.

Sicilian: The Sicilian slice is also baked on the focaccia bread, but is only topped with San Marzano tomato sauce before being placed in the oven. After baking, the pizza is topped with Calabrian chili oil, garlic bread



crumbs, and parmesan shavings. We definitely like this slice more than the grandma because it has way more flavor from the chili oil and bread crumbs. If you like the tomato slice, then you will definitely like the Sicilian.

Caesar Salad: Moving away from pizza, the Caesar salad is definitely one of the weaker items on the menu at Fini, not having much flavor and being annoying to eat. The Caesar salad is not chopped, which makes it frustrating to eat because the romaine leaves are large and difficult to cut with a plastic knife. The Caesar dressing is served on the side, which we like because you can control how much dressing is on the salad, and makes it so the lettuce doesn't get soggy before you eat the salad. In our opinion, the Caesar dressing doesn't have much flavor, tastes only like vinegar and cheese, and is very bitter. It wouldn't be our first recommendation.

Italian Ices: The Italian ices at Fini are made with a variety of fresh fruits and nuts, including lemon, almond, peanut butter, coconut, strawberry, melon, and tangerine. These flavors change year-round, with many flavors only being available for a few weeks at a time. Although all of the ices are dairy-free, they are super creamy and taste like ice cream. Our favorite is almond ice. Although almond sounds like an obscure flavor, it tastes like a mix of vanilla and Nutella and has chunks of almond mixed throughout that make the ice crunchy. We definitely recommend trying the ices at Fini!

Overall, Fini is one of the best new pizza spots in New York City, and we highly recommend that people visit. If you do end up stopping by over the summer, you might just see one of us working behind the counter!





New York City is home to some of the world's top ramen spots, each offering their own unique takes on the classic dish. Having lived in NYC for my whole life, and having an affinity for good ramen, I am sharing my opinion on what I believe to be the best ramen spots in the city.

Okiboru House of Tsukemen - Lower East Side

This Lower East Side staple specializes in a type of ramen called tsukemen – cold noodles that are dipped into a separate bowl of warm broth before being eaten. Along with this unique style of ramen, they also serve more traditional styles with more rich, thick broths. The ambiance of Okiboru adds to the experience, with a cozy yet vibrant setting that compliments the meal. Their attention to detail in both service and food preparation sets them apart, making each visit a memorable culinary journey. I have been to this spot a few times, and I'm always eager to go back. However, often, the lines are long at this place. If you are planning a visit, be ready to wait around 20 minutes outside before you get your food. Despite this, I would still certainly recommend it – the amazing ramen makes up for the wait!



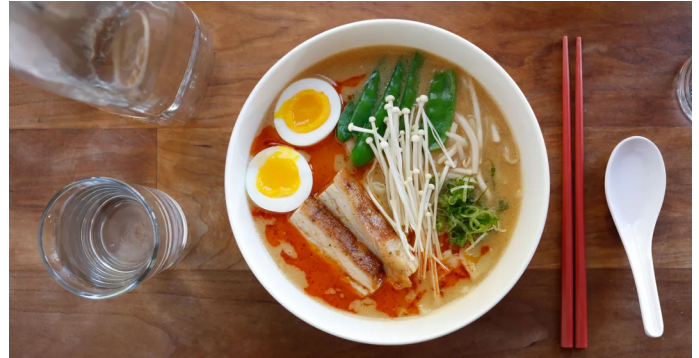
Marufuku Ramen - East Village

This ramen spot, which originated in San Francisco, opened in the East Village in 2021. Their specialty is tonkotsu ramen – a type of ramen that comes from Fukuoka, Japan, which is known for its slow-cooked noodles and flavorful pork. Marufuku Ramen's interior is simple yet inviting, creating a warm atmosphere that enhances the dining experience. Additionally, their staff is known for being exceptionally friendly and knowledgeable, offering recommendations and ensuring a pleasant visit. Marufuku is a great place if you're looking for a quick bite to eat. If you stop by, make sure to check out their Hakata Tonkotsu DX; a tonkotsu ramen that comes with two types of pork belly, corn, nori, and super thin noodles.



Chuko - Brooklyn

This ramen shop, found in Prospect Heights in Brooklyn, does not specialize in one type of ramen like the previous two did. At Chuko, you can customize just about every aspect of your bowl – you pick your favorite broth, meat, and toppings – and just about every combination is amazing. The modern, yet unpretentious decor of Chuko creates a relaxed environment, perfect for enjoying a bowl of ramen. They also offer a selection of Japanese-inspired cocktails and sake, which pair wonderfully with their ramen. However, if you go once, you need to go back again – finding your favorite combination will most certainly take multiple visits.



Tonchin - Midtown

Tonchin, one of NYC's most popular ramen spots, is almost always packed to the brim with customers eagerly awaiting their rich broths and perfectly-cooked pork – at dinner, that is. If you go for lunch, however, you will find it much less busy, and you might actually have a chance at finding a table. The staff at Tonchin is particularly adept at handling the bustling crowd, ensuring that each guest feels attended to. Their innovative approach to traditional ramen flavors keeps regulars coming back for more. Once you're there, order their classic lunch special that comes with a delicious tonkotsu ramen (which I think is the best in the city) and an unagi rice ball, a tightly packed sphere of eel and fresh rice.



Ippudo - East Village

While I have never actually been to Ippudo in the East Village, their ramen has become a regular delivery order in my house. My go-to is the Shiromaru Classic, a tonkotsu ramen with pork belly and a variety of other customizable toppings. Their delivery service is remarkably efficient, ensuring that the food arrives hot and fresh, almost as if you were dining in the restaurant itself. Also, the consistency in taste and quality, even when ordered for delivery, speaks volumes about their dedication to excellence. Their delivery comes super neatly-packaged and easy to heat up, and their portions are huge, which make for great leftovers. And while you're at it, make sure to get an order of their delicious pork buns.

These ramen spots in New York City not only offer exceptional bowls of ramen but also provide an overall experience that makes each visit special. Whether it's the unique flavors, the ambiance, or the service, each of these establishments is a testament to the city's vibrant and diverse culinary scene.



My Civil Rights Trip

Charlie Weidman

This past November, I was fortunate enough to embark on a trip to the South with a group of 15 other teens from my synagogue to learn about the Civil Rights Movement. We visited Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery, Alabama, as well as Atlanta, Georgia to gain a deep understanding of the pivotal historical events that occurred there. Through talking to civil rights activists and leaders, visiting historical sights and landmarks where key events of the movement took place, and touring museums, I was able to experience and learn about the history of the movement in a way that no textbook would ever allow me to.



Day 1: Birmingham and Selma – The Stories of Bishop Calvin Woods and Lynda Blackmon Lowery

Our journey began in Birmingham, Alabama, where we spoke with Bishop Calvin Woods. A pivotal figure in the Birmingham movement, Bishop Woods shared anecdotes of his experiences as a civil rights activist with us. The stories he recounted of being arrested and subjected to six months of hard labor, and his daring act to help Reverend Jameson escape a death threat by hiding in a casket, no longer felt like distant stories, but living history. Bishop Woods emphasized the critical role of faith in the movement. He revealed that divine inspiration from a young age propelled him and many leaders to speak against societal injustice. This testimony profoundly deepened my understanding of the movement's spiritual backbone; while I knew of the involvement of religion in the movement, I had not fully understood the extent of its importance. He

also underscored the power of song as a way of maintaining morale and spirit throughout times of hardship. He led us in singing “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Us Around,” one of his favorite songs from the movement, that still felt extremely uplifting and motivating to this day. His account of the significant role of children in the Birmingham movement was also enlightening. He encouraged us to keep this spirit and to continue standing up for what we believe in today. He proudly recounted his successful effort to clear the records of over 3,000 children arrested during the protests. This personal interaction with Bishop Woods truly allowed me to grasp the essence of the movement.

Later that day, we traveled to Selma where we met Lynda Blackmon Lowery, an activist who bravely participated in the Voting Rights March, enduring the horrors of Bloody Sunday. Lynda's story began when she was just seven, with the tragic death of her mother who had not been denied a blood

transfusion because of the racial segregation in medical care. At thirteen, inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., she embarked on her journey as an activist. By age fifteen, she had been arrested nine times, for her protest for black suffrage. Her recounting of her father's experience with biased voter registration tests illuminated the systemic barriers African Americans faced. Lynda's participation in the Selma to Montgomery March, her injuries during Bloody Sunday, and her triumphant return for the successful march, were testaments to her unyielding spirit. She told us of her philosophy of combating hatred, stating that while she may not have fully *loved* everyone, namely the people who committed these horrific acts against her, she would never *hate* them, providing a powerful lesson in resilience and forgiveness. Walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge ourselves, I felt the weight of its history and the mix of anguish and triumph that the landmark epitomizes.

Day 2: Montgomery – Rosa Parks and Legacy Museums

The next day, in Montgomery, we visited the Rosa Parks Museum and the Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum. The Rosa Parks Museum was an immersive journey into the past. The detailed exhibits on Parks' arrest, a symbol of peaceful yet profound defiance, and the Montgomery city bus, brought to life the everyday realities of segregation. The museum's Cleveland Avenue "Time Machine" was particularly amazing. This interactive exhibit took us back to the 1900s, illustrating Rosa Parks' brave acts and the stark realities of Jim Crow segregation.

We then visited the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum. This institution presented a narrative of African American history, from the brutalities of the slave trade to the ongoing challenges of mass incarceration. The exhibits demonstrated the link between past injustices and present-day disparities. What made the Legacy Museum stand out was its focus on storytelling. Through first-person accounts, interactive media, and visually arresting displays, the museum created a visceral connection to the experiences of those who suffered under and fought against racial injustice.



Pit Stop: Bucee's

As we journeyed towards Atlanta, we made an unforgettable pit stop at Buc-ee's, a place that can only be described as a road trip wonderland. This isn't your average gas station; it's a Texas-sized emporium that offers an astonishing array of goods that go well beyond what one might expect. Buc-ee's is an iconic chain with multiple locations situated conveniently along Texas' busiest highways. Its reputation as a road trip essential is well-deserved, and our experience there was nothing short of amazing. The moment we stepped into Buc-ee's, we were overwhelmed by its sheer size and variety. It was the largest gas station I had

ever seen, an expansive space filled with an array of products ranging from hunting equipment to clothing. But the highlight, undoubtedly, was the food section. At the center of the store was a circular counter, containing at least 10 cooks who were preparing about 20 different types of barbeque. I opted for a chopped brisket sandwich, and while it was obviously not at the level of Texas's best barbecue spots, it was still more than good



enough to tie me over for the next 2 hours of driving. Equally impressive were the Beaver Nuggets, Buc-ee's most iconic snack. These crunchy, sweet puffed corn nuggets are a unique treat, akin to a caramel-flavored Cheeto. The perfect combination of sweetness and crunch, Beaver Nuggets are an addictive snack that you can't find anywhere else. What sets Buc-ee's apart is not just the quality of its food but the sheer variety. From the aisles packed with colorful snacks and candies to the rows of drinks and prepared foods, there's something for everyone. Whether you're looking for a quick snack or a full meal, Buc-ee's has you covered. The atmosphere at Buc-ee's is part of its charm. Despite being crowded, the store has a vibrant energy that adds to the excitement of

exploring its offerings. It's a place where you can take a break from your journey, refuel, and find some unique treats to enjoy on the road.

Day 3: Atlanta – The King Center and an Uplifting Service at Ebenezer Baptist Church

The third day of our trip brought us to Atlanta, the city synonymous with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement. Our visit to The King Center was a deep dive into the life and legacy of Dr. King. Visiting his childhood home, his final resting place, and the Freedom Hall Museum provided a comprehensive overview of his life and work. Understanding his dedication to nonviolence, especially in the face of extreme adversity, was particularly moving.

The highlight of the day, and perhaps of the entire trip, was attending a Sunday service at the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church. The church, where Dr. King preached, is more than a place of worship. It's a beacon of hope. The service at Ebenezer was truly inspirational. The church, filled with vibrant gospel music, reverberated with a sense of community and telling of history. Listening to Reverend and Senator Raphael Warnock's sermon, imbued with the same spirit of social justice and equality that Dr. King embodied, was a powerful experience. His words that connected past struggles with present challenges resonated deeply with us all. The congregation's warmth, even to us as outsiders, and the sense of being part of something much larger than ourselves was overwhelming. The church service was a living, breathing homage to the legacy of Dr. King and the countless others who fought for civil rights.

TASTING WINTER MAGIC: THE FOOD EXPERIENCE AT BRYANT PARK'S WINTER VILLAGE

SYLVIE FRIEDBERG

Many of us have heard of, if not been to, Bryant Park's Winter Village. Every year, around the holidays, my "for you page" is filled with videos of the ice-skating rink, the tree, and the countless booths. However, I had never gotten a chance to go until this year. Feeling very spirited, a few friends and I visited the village one night in mid-November. And I have to say, it most definitely lived up to the hype. We were ecstatic at the sight of the enormous tree, people ice skating, and the dozens of booths that flashed signs of "Hot Chocolate!" However, seeing the myriad of things to do and food to try upon arrival was a little overwhelming. We didn't know where to start. But don't fret! I've gathered a list of my top three favorite stands from our visit so you know exactly where to begin your Bryant Park adventure.

#1. MAX BRENNER'S HOT CHOCOLATE

If you are searching for the best hot chocolate in New York City this winter, Max Brenner's hot chocolate is an absolute must-try. Like many, I had arrived at Bryant Park expecting to try the famous hot chocolate at S'mores N'more, where a fist-sized marshmallow is roasted on top of your cup of hot cocoa. However, there was a forty-minute line outside the booth, and to be completely honest, none of us were willing to wait that long when we had so much to try and explore in only one night. We continued our hunt for hot chocolate and stumbled across Max Brenner. While there was still a line in front of the stand, which told us the hot cocoa couldn't be bad, it was not nearly a forty-minute wait. When I got to the front of the line and ordered the hot chocolate, I was shocked at the price (\$7.50 for a cup smaller than the "tall" at Starbucks).

But I must say, for an end-of-hell-week treat, it exceeded expectations. It was the creamiest, most heavenly hot chocolate I have ever tasted. The drink was topped with two jumbo marshmallows that did not sink but sat on top of the thick, lavish chocolate. I took a sip, and the chocolate poured out of the small sipping hole, oozing onto my tongue and melting like chocolate fondue. So, if you are just as impatient as I am and are unwilling to stand in a line that stretches across half the width of Bryant Park, check out Max Brenner for a cup of mouth-watering hot cocoa this winter.



#2. CHEESE WHEEL PASTA

Although beverages are important, and hot cocoa is a winter essential, we all know what's most important: FOOD. If you're anything like my friends and me, it's impossible to go to any food court or restaurant because you will stop at every food item and go, "OOO I want this! No wait, I want this! MMM, this also looks so good!" So, while walking around Bryant Park we may have said we were going to buy every item of food, we eventually narrowed it down. Over the past few weeks, we had heard about the viral Cheese Wheel Pasta place, so we *had* to stop and see what it was all about. As expected, there was a *huge* line, but we deemed that, this time, it was worth the wait. We stood in line watching the pasta be stirred round and round in a cheese wheel that was hollowed out into a bowl shape. Fresh out of the pot, the pasta is placed on the cheese wheel, and melts the cheese into a luscious sauce. The line was not too long, and ten

minutes later, we found ourselves face-to-face with the cheese wheel, eagerly waiting to be served. We paid for our pasta, found a table to sit at, and opened the takeout box. Just cracking it open, the pungent aroma of cheese seeped out. We were all in total awe. The velvety pasta slipped off our forks and into our mouths. Every delectable, savory bite defined perfection.



#3. WAFFLES AND DINGES

Our third highlight from our visit to this magical food wonderland was Waffles and Dinges. These waffles were absolutely *glorious*. We had originally planned on getting crepes, but one of my friends said she had a gut feeling about this waffle place and convinced us all to get waffles instead. Again, we waited in line for about ten minutes, but *wow*, was it worth it. These waffles were the food equivalents of pillows: so fluffy and perfectly airy. Digging through the melted chocolate, whipped cream, and berries that sat on top of

the gridded waffle, we cut into these golden-brown treats. We bit into the waffles, sinking our teeth through a thin, crispy layer that coated the soft inside of the dough, and the chocolate-whipped cream blend seeped into our mouths. We all ate silently, eyes wide open and marveling at what we'd just tasted. They were easily the best waffles we've ever had!

The Winter Village will reopen in November 2024! Make your way there to get into the holiday spirit!



Footnotes:

- [1] <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/361976888783500874/>
- [2] <https://mikesfoodadventures.wordpress.com/2017/04/22/le-relais-de-lentrecote>
- [3] <https://auclairondeschasseurs.fr/es/gallery>
- [4] <https://www.travelandleisure.com/christmas-travel/nyc-winter-village-bryant-park-opening>
- [5] <https://maxbrenner.com/>
- [6] <https://www.yelp.com/biz/wafels-and-dinges-new-york-22>
- [7] <https://www.facebook.com/TroyUniversityRosaParksMuseum/>
- [8] <https://www.discoverdunwoody.com/listing/the-king-center/20/>
- [9] <https://news.usask.ca/articles/research/2021/fossil-secret->
- [10] <https://burgess-shale.rom.on.ca/fossils/anomalocaris-canadensis/>
- [11] <https://www.nature.com/articles/530268a>

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