

Lifestyle

Your Guide to Flushing, Queens: A true New York melting pot with a booming Chinatown

By Nicole Lyn Pesce, DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Each Sunday, Your New York offers an up-close look at a city neighborhood. This week, take a trip along [Flushing](#)'s Main St. The offerings in this melting pot of Asian cultures range from Middle Eastern markets to Korean cuisine, but it's the rapidly expanding new Chinatown that's largely responsible for this nabe's business boom.



Flushing is a true New York City melting pot, calling itself home to everything from Middle Eastern markets to Korean cuisine.



Downtown Flushing is the Big Apple's second-largest Chinatown. Pedestrians bustle along on Main St. & Roosevelt Ave.

1. Downtown Flushing is [the Big Apple](#)'s second-largest Chinatown, and the Main St. district is its lifeline. Both the 7 train and [Long Island Rail Road](#) have stations on the bustling block, drawing scores of shoppers and commuters to the chain stores and local shops that sport bilingual signs. It's easy to forget you're in [New York](#). "Being here is like being back in [China](#)," says [Carol Tseng](#), 58. "Everyone talks in Chinese. You can eat Chinese food. The signs are in Chinese. It feels like home."

2. Although most eateries in the heart of Flushing are [Hong Kong](#)-style Cantonese, the Taiwanese Taipan Bakery boasts two outposts along Main St. — compared to just one in [Manhattan](#)'s Chinatown. The authentic Taiwanese eats at 37-25 Main St. are sweet and cheap, with items like roasted pork pineapple buns for \$1 and mousse cakes topped with fruit for just \$2.75.

3. No trip to Flushing is complete without a taste of [Peking](#) duck, and Corner 28 (40-28 Main St.) boasts the best deal on fowl around. "One piece for \$1," brags manager [Dragon Cheng](#). "We're the only ones in Flushing with that price." On a recent Monday afternoon, the place was packed, as locals lined up for \$1 skewers of pork from the takeout window or loaded their trays for the \$4.50 combo, which serves three dishes (including specialties like teriyaki Chilean sea bass) plus a free water and soup.

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4. Visitors of all stripes visit the Five Star Beauty Salon (41-36 Main St.) for a quick trim and to catch up on local politics. "We get all different customers: Chinese, Spanish, Indian," says manager [Jacqueline Lin](#), who's lived here for more than 25 years. "It's really a new Flushing."

5. Only on Main St. can you find a Buddhist temple next to a Halal meat market. The Guan Yin Temple (43-35 Main St.) looks like any other building from the outside, but behind its red door is a gorgeous sanctuary decked with golden idols, glowing lamps and saffron cushions. Group services are held every Saturday and Sunday by Master Ch'an Yun On and his assistant, [Rev. Jing Zhi](#), in English and Chinese.

6. Flushing's Little [India](#) is situated farther south along Main St., but the East Asian influence emanates from the newsstands and supermarkets along the way. "Franklin Ave. was once the dividing line between the Asian businesses and the Indian businesses," observes [Sajit Sharma](#), manager of the Kabul Kabab House (42-51 Main St.). "But now, when people call and ask where my restaurant is, they say, 'Oh, you're in the New Chinatown!'"

7. While the recession has hurt development in the district, the area is still a growing housing and commercial area. The Queens Crossing Mall opened last year, catering to increasingly wealthy Chinese and Korean immigrants. The [Rockefeller Group](#) is constructing Flushing Commons, a mixed-use development space downtown. "Major streetscape improvements are underway in the neighborhood," adds Faith Hope Consolo of [Prudential Douglas Elliman](#), and new lights, signs, benches and plantings have been added throughout downtown.

8. Newcomers from Korea, [Latin America](#) and [Russia](#) have been moving into the nabe in greater numbers. [Kim-Alexa Gatling](#), 18, takes a break from her job at Modell's with [Samuel Noailles](#), 20. Fellow local [Anthony Harris](#), 31, has also witnessed his hometown's transition. "I've seen the neighborhood change from bagels to Chinese laundry, but it's changed for the better," he says. "It's a great place to live. Rent is still cheap!"