

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS / DUMBO / VINEGAR HILL, BROOKLYN

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS, DUMBO AND VINEGAR HILL

A MUSEENYC WALKING TOUR · FREE, AND NOT SPONSORED BY ANYONE

DISTANCE 3 miles	TIME 3 hours
STOPS 14, 3 private (sidewalk only)	START Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 1 (A/C to High St)
END Brooklyn Borough Hall (2/3/4/5/R to Borough Hall)	MAP museenyc.com/tours/02-brooklyn-heights/map

America's first suburb, plus the warehouse district below it. Start on the water, climb into the brownstones, end at the civic center. The Promenade view is the famous part, but the side streets are the real thing.

ROUTE CARD

Screenshot or tear off this page. Full detail for each stop follows.

1 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1	8 Squibb Park Bridge
2 Fulton Ferry Landing	9 Brooklyn Heights Promenade
3 Jane's Carousel	10 Willow Street, 20 to 26 PRIVATE — VIEW FROM THE SIDEWALK ONLY
4 Empire Stores	11 Plymouth Church
5 Washington Street at Water Street	12 Grace Court Alley PRIVATE — VIEW FROM THE SIDEWALK ONLY
6 Vinegar Hill	13 Montague Street
7 Brooklyn Navy Yard and BLDG 92 PRIVATE — VIEW FROM THE SIDEWALK ONLY	14 Brooklyn Borough Hall

Private stops include people's homes: no gates, no doorways, no photographing into windows.

GETTING THERE AND BACK

START A/C to High St, one block from Pier 1. Or F to York St for the DUMBO end. NYC Ferry to DUMBO/Fulton Ferry Landing.

FINISH	2/3/4/5 and R at Borough Hall-Court St, right at the last stop.
ALONG THE ROUTE	B25 along Fulton St. B69 on Vanderbilt and Washington Ave. B61 and B57 through the Navy Yard side. NYC Ferry from Fulton Ferry Landing to Wall St and Midtown.

Cutting it short

Every walk here has exits. Good ones on this route:

- After stop 5 (Washington St): F at York St, three blocks east.
- After stop 7 (Navy Yard): F at York St, or B57/B69 on Flushing Ave.
- After stop 9 (Promenade): 2/3 at Clark St, two blocks inland.
- After stop 11 (Plymouth Church): A/C at High St, three blocks north.

THE WALK

1 BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK, PIER 1

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Built on the footprint of a container terminal that closed in the 1980s. The lawn gives you the classic composition: Lower Manhattan across the water, Brooklyn Bridge to your right, Statue of Liberty to the left. Walk the granite steps at the north end down to the water.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70105, -73.99685

2 FULTON FERRY LANDING

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: North through the park past the granite steps, under the bridge. The landing is the wooden pier on your left.

For two centuries this was the only link between Brooklyn and Manhattan. Walt Whitman rode this ferry daily and wrote *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry* about it; lines from the poem are cut into the railing. The bridge opening in 1883 killed the ferry and the neighborhood emptied out for a hundred years.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70328, -73.99506

3 JANE'S CAROUSEL

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: East along the water into the park lawn. The glass pavilion is ahead of you.

A restored 1922 Philadelphia Toboggan Company carousel, bought at auction and rebuilt over decades by Jane Walentas, then housed in a glass pavilion designed by Jean Nouvel. Riding it is optional. Seeing it lit at dusk with the bridge behind it is not.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70349, -73.99320

4 EMPIRE STORES

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: East on Water St one block. The brick warehouses are on your right and the courtyard cuts straight through the block.

Heads up: Roof terrace is free and most people miss it. Stairs are inside the courtyard.

Brick Civil War-era warehouses that stored coffee, sugar and molasses. The renovation punched a public courtyard straight through the block and put a free rooftop terrace on top. Take the stairs up. The roof view of the Manhattan Bridge is better than the one from the street.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70328, -73.99045

5 WASHINGTON STREET AT WATER STREET

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: Out the east side, continue on Water St to Washington St. Stand in the middle of Washington and look uphill.

Heads up: Live street with traffic. Do not stand in the road for the photo.

The single most photographed spot in Brooklyn, and it is genuinely good: cobblestones running uphill, brick walls on both sides, the bridge tower filling the gap, and the Empire State Building lined up dead center behind it. Go early. By 10am it is a queue.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70365, -73.98950

6 VINEGAR HILL

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: East on Water St, under the Manhattan Bridge, then Plymouth St about 8 minutes to Hudson Ave.

Heads up: Quiet residential blocks. Keep your voice down and stay off stoops.

A pocket of Belgian-block streets and Federal row houses that survived because the Navy Yard and Con Edison boxed it in and nobody bothered to redevelop it. Hudson Avenue and Front Street are the core. It is residential and quiet, so keep your voice down. This is the closest you can get to walking through 1840s Brooklyn.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70335, -73.98177

7 BROOKLYN NAVY YARD AND BLDG 92

PRIVATE — VIEW FROM THE SIDEWALK ONLY

Walk: South on Hudson Ave to Sands St, then east to Flushing Ave. Building 92 is at Carlton Ave.

Or ride: B57 or B69 bus along Flushing Ave.

The yard built the Monitor and the Missouri and employed 70,000 people in World War II. It is now a working industrial park with more than 550 businesses. You can't wander the whole site, but the perimeter and the free BLDG 92 museum and visitor center, open Thursday to Sunday, show you the scale.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70085, -73.97740

8 SQUIBB PARK BRIDGE

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: Long stretch back west. Retrace Plymouth and Water St under both bridges, about 15 minutes, then up to Squibb Park.
Or ride: F train York St to Jay St, or A/C from High St. Faster if your legs are going.

A steel switchback bridge connecting Brooklyn Heights to the waterfront 30 feet below. The original wooden version bounced so much it had to be closed and rebuilt. Use it to climb from the park up into the neighborhood without a long detour.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.70003, -73.99580

9 BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PROMENADE

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: Up the switchback bridge to Columbia Heights, then south. The Promenade entrance is at Orange St.

Robert Moses wanted the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway to cut through the Heights. The neighborhood fought him and the compromise was to stack the highway in two decks against the bluff and put a public esplanade on the roof. Traffic is directly under your feet and you can barely hear it. Walk the full length.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.69609, -73.99694

10 WILLOW STREET, 20 TO 26

PRIVATE — VIEW FROM THE SIDEWALK ONLY

Walk: Inland at Clark St, turn left on Willow St. Nos. 155-159 are the Federal houses right there; walk north toward Middagh for the rest.

Heads up: All private homes. Sidewalk only.

Willow Street is the best block in the Heights. Nos. 20 to 26 are 1840s Greek Revival; Nos. 155 to 159 further north are 1820s Federal houses with a tunnel rumored to connect them, long claimed as an Underground Railroad stop. All private. Look at the doorways, the ironwork, the bootscrapers.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.69712, -73.99450

11 PLYMOUTH CHURCH

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: East on Orange St one block to Hicks St. The church takes the whole block between Hicks and Henry.

Heads up: Sanctuary is open limited hours. Check before you build the day around it.

Henry Ward Beecher preached abolition from this pulpit and staged mock slave auctions to buy people's freedom. It was a major Underground Railroad station, nicknamed the Grand Central Depot of the railroad. Lincoln worshipped here twice. The sanctuary is plain on purpose. Check the visiting hours before you go.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.69708, -73.99345

12 GRACE COURT ALLEY

PRIVATE — VIEW FROM THE SIDEWALK ONLY

Walk: South on Hicks St about 6 blocks. Grace Court Alley is on your left just past Remsen St.

Or ride: B25 along Fulton St if you want to skip ahead to Borough Hall.

A dead-end alley of converted carriage houses that served the mansions on Remsen Street. Small, cobbled, easy to miss. Worth the two-minute detour for the doors alone.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.69344, -73.99470

13 MONTAGUE STREET

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: North one block on Hicks, turn right on Montague St.

Not architecturally special, and that is the point: this is where the neighborhood actually shops and eats. Walk it east toward the courthouse for the transition from residential Heights to civic Brooklyn.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.69425, -73.99380

14 BROOKLYN BOROUGH HALL

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Walk: East on Montague to Court St. Borough Hall is the Greek Revival building straight ahead.

Built as the city hall of the independent City of Brooklyn, the third-largest city in America before the 1898 consolidation. Greek Revival with a cast-iron cupola added later. Stand on the steps and look at the scale of what Brooklyn thought it was going to be.

[Open in maps](#) · 40.69281, -73.99030

COMBINING THIS WITH OTHER TOURS

- [Tour 9 \(Two Bridges\)](#) shares five stops with this one: Pier 1, Fulton Ferry Landing, Jane's Carousel, Empire Stores and Washington St. If you are doing Tour 9, you can skip those here and start this walk at the Squibb Park Bridge.
- [Tour 9 in reverse](#) drops you at Columbus Park in Chinatown, which is where [Tour 7](#) starts. Bridge walk into a Chinatown walk is a strong full day.
- [Tour 6 \(Fort Greene\)](#) starts at BAM, a 15-minute walk or one stop on the 2/3 from Borough Hall where this tour ends.

WALKING NAVIGATION LINKS

Google caps a directions link at ten points, so the route is split. Open a segment on your phone and it starts walking navigation.

- [Stops 1–10](#)
- [Stops 10–14](#)

THE MAP

Open the MUSEENYC map for this walk at museenyc.com/tours/02-brooklyn-heights/map. Every pin carries its own walking directions, transit alternative and notes.

- **Green pin** = open to the public.
- **Orange pin** = private, look from the sidewalk. Several are people's homes: no gates, no doorways, no photographing into windows.

The orange line is a straight-line guide between stops, not the walking route. Use the navigation links for turn-by-turn.

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Questions about a stop, a closure, or anything else on this walk? Reach MUSEENYC at museenyc.tours@gmail.com or [@museenyc](https://www.instagram.com/museenyc) on Instagram. More walks at museenyc.com/tours.