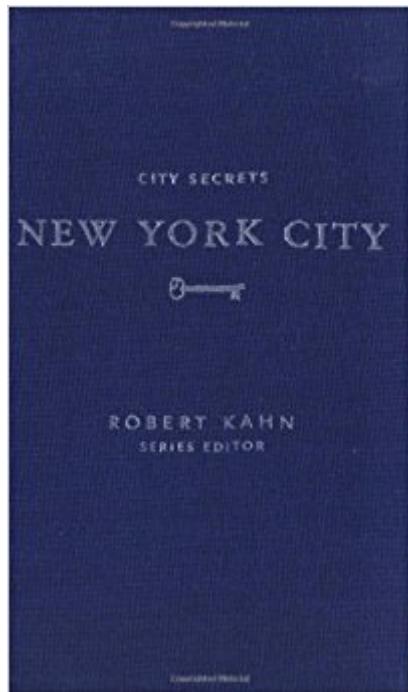


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City Secrets: New York City



Synopsis

City Secrets has turned its innovative concept to New York, and the result is the fourth and—at 582 pages—the largest in this acclaimed series of guidebooks. *City Secrets New York City*, edited by Robert Kahn, is a breathtaking guide to art, food, architecture, and cultural landmarks in all five boroughs, written by more than 300 savvy and sophisticated New Yorkers. The entries range in tone from the literary to the conversational, the humorous to the scholarly. Together, this collection of vignettes forms not only a practical guidebook, but a dazzling panorama of the magnificent city. In the pages of *City Secrets New York City*: A Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist evokes a timeless Village bookstore. An artist takes you on an intimate tour of three exceptional paintings. A food editor invites you into the sepia-toned interiors of vintage saloons. An architect introduces you to the tailor that fitted Ernest Hemingway in the 1930's. A writer leads you to the Diamond District to find the best cheese blintzes in the city. A producer recommends a Midtown coffee shop where actors, directors and producers can be found hatching the next Broadway hit. This elegant, clothbound book features a subtle, non-guidebook design, detailed maps of all five boroughs, and recommended reading. New Yorkers who contributed to *City Secrets New York City* include: novelists Michael Cunningham and Rick Moody, actors Laura Linney and Eric Stoltz, journalists Anna Quindlen and Kurt Andersen, poet laureate Mark Strand, neurologist Oliver Sacks, architects Richard Meier and Philip Johnson, MoMA director Glenn Lowry, artist Brice Marden, playwright John Guare, designer Kate Spade, and many others, including historians, urban archaeologists, gourmets, curators, and filmmakers.

Book Information

Turtleback: 586 pages

Publisher: Little Bookroom (September 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1892145081

ISBN-13: 978-1892145086

Product Dimensions: 4.4 x 1.2 x 7.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,846,627 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #47 in Books > Travel > United States > New York > New York City #543 in Books > Travel > United States > New York > General #805 in Books > Travel > Specialty Travel > Theme Parks

Customer Reviews

"Kahn's book is rich in lovely little facts that enhance a visit... You don't have to come to New York to learn from "City Secrets: New York City" --- it's equally enjoyable as a glorious armchair travel guide. And, with a fast Internet connection, you can drop in at most of the destinations. Seen that way, this is a colossal bargain." --HeadButler

I'm a true blue Southerner, always will be. But, as they say, "I love NY"!!! After several dozen visits, I discovered this book and am happy to report it proves there is always something new around every corner of the most unique and exciting metropolis in the world. Makes you feel kind of smug, this book is the secret password, the all-access pass! Loved it.

Some of the information in this book is obviously outdated, but it's a great look at NYC's past, with a few tips on places that still hold relevant.

Even if you know the city, this book is an excellent addition to a guidebook collection. Lots of "insider" views, with good backstories for the places. Every time I open it, find a new place to check out, and not a dud so far. Good size and nice printing to boot

Every winter I spend a week in NYC -to attend the opera, theater, concerts, museums, etc. I hoped this book would offer me some unexpected, relatively undiscovered places to explore. Not so. A waste of my money.

Almost every afternoon, as I go to collect the kid at school, I run into a foreign couple at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 94th Street. They have a guidebook in hand. And yet they are lost."Looking for the ICP?" I ask, meaning the Institute for Contemporary Photography. They nod."It used to be here," I say. "Then a hedge-fund billionaire bought it and spent \$50 million renovating it --- and adding a lead-lined room to protect against a chemical, biological, or dirty bomb attack. The ICP is now at 43rd and 6th Avenue."They look glum --- they realize their guidebook is old and discredited, and the ICP is miles away --- so I tell them about the Frick Collection, a pleasant walk down 5th Avenue. "The most beautiful museum in the city," I say, "Turners. Vermeers. An interior fountain."They look grateful, if still befuddled --- their guidebook didn't rave about the Frick --- and they dutifully head toward 70th Street. (They'll never get there. At 88th Street, the Guggenheim will seduce them. It always does.)If they'd been carrying City Secrets: New York City, they'd know nothing about the ICP

--- but they'd learn quite a lot about the Frick. They'd know you can see the entire collection in 30-45 minutes, or spend a lot more time with its pictures, atrium and fountains. They'd find praise from Agnes Gund, President of the Museum of Modern Art, and two painters. And they'd get an art historian's description of the "spiritual ecstasy" conveyed by Giovanni Bellini in his painting, Saint Francis in the Desert. The City Secrets guides --- there are also ones for Books and Movies that make [...] seem positively lowbrow --- are created by a Manhattan architect named Robert Kahn. He knows a lot of smart people in the arts and media, and he leans on them for their best expertise. The rest: the most interesting guide to Manhattan since *Hidden New York*. [Warning: "City Secrets: New York City" is not for first-time visitors to New York. If your itinerary is the Empire State, the Statue of Liberty, Times Square and Chinatown, a standard guidebook will do quite nicely. Buy a Zagat Restaurant Guide and a Metrocard, and you're set.] Kahn's book is rich in lovely little facts that enhance a visit. Ellis Island, for example. As you enter, you must climb a flight of stairs. That was by design --- as a museum architect explains, immigrants who had trouble making that ascent were immediately led off to doctors for further investigation. Anna Quindlen recommends the Peking Duck House, where you can order the specialty without calling in advance; another suggests the Bridge CafÃ©, a charming old haunt of mine. A film producer urges you to ignore "a particularly American species, Frat Boy," who thinks he owns the Corner Bistro --- press beyond those tables and settle in for a great burger, fries and a beer. [You'll even learn about that great Village restaurant, Chumley's, which has no sign. Sadly, it's closed.] Kate Spade needs 300 words to praise Bemelmans Bar sufficiently. The Metropolitan Museum of Art fills 16 pages --- I was happy to see that there's a full page about a small, magic room called the Gubbio Studiolo. The good news: These 550 pages make time for the hawks in Central Park and Nathan's hot dogs. You don't have to come to New York to learn from "City Secrets: New York City" --- it's equally enjoyable as a glorious armchair travel guide. And, with a fast Internet connection, you can drop in at most of the destinations. Seen that way, this is a colossal bargain.

In the rapidly changing face of New York City fast becoming another strip mall full of chain shops and uniformity, it is refreshing to note that yes, real New York still exists--those unappreciated, and undervalued landmarks, shops, and restaurants that truly define NYC. Famous luminaries living in the city--architects, artists, curators, and gourmets--guide you to those hidden gems through witty, and informative stories on the cultural, and historical significance of each place. Entries are organized by neighborhood, and comes complete with addresses, phone numbers, hours of operation, and directions. City Secrets is a must for saavy travelers, and residents alike--there are

many things here I never knew about. rkchin

I have observed an odd phenomenon. Despite it's age and crushing population, visitors, residents and even self-styled experts on NYC are always exploring and claiming to have made "discoveries" or unearthed amazing secrets. This book is another example of a book that proves the point. I am happy to report that the author (editor, really) has crafted a book that really has nuggets of knowledge that most readers will find new, interesting or both. Its facts are arranged logically and the writing conveys the passion one feels when exploring an exciting place such as NYC. Without the passion, the book would only be a book of lists. And, because the author has asked his friends to write only about things that they love, each short "secret" narrative is alive with personal insights and opinions - I like that. If you have read this far, I bet you will like the book as well.

I absolutely love this book-- I recently moved to NYC, and this book is by far the best at introducing me to the parts of the city that go beyond tourist-ville. The only problem-- it was published in 2002, and it's high time for an updated version. I went out with the book today, and two of the places had new addresses and one had disappeared altogether. Yes, I should have confirmed ahead of time, but it was still annoying. Still worth the buy-- just make sure you look up any establishments before making extra efforts to go there!

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