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## Take the A Train

Or the Q or the Bx12 or the LIRR. You won't need a car to get your fill of sun and sand at any of these ten beaches.

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Compiled by Kate Appleton

*Approx. travel times assume you start your journey in midtown Manhattan.*

### Brighton Beach

Brightwater Ave., Brooklyn (Stretches east from Corbin Pl. to Coney Island)

**The scene:** Mom-and-pop shops with Cyrillic signage and eateries specializing in decent borscht and vodka line the boardwalk, giving Little Odessa a kitschy, Old World appeal. At the oceanfront park, Russian-speaking men face off at passionate rounds of speed chess.

**Getting there:** B, Q to Brighton Beach

**Travel time:** 45 minutes-1 hour

**Contact:** 718-946-1350

**Fees:** \$2 subway; free beach admission



(Photo: Sandra Nygaard)

### Coney Island

Surf Ave. at W. 12th St. (Stretches from W. 37th St. to Brighton Beach)

**The scene:** A gritty relic of Americana charm, Coney Island is home to the rickety Cyclone roller coaster, the New York Aquarium, a circus sideshow, Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs—and its famous eating contest.

**Getting there:** D, Q, N, or F to Coney Island Terminal-Stillwell Ave.

**Travel time:** 45 minutes-1 hour

**Contact:** 718-946-1350; [coneyisland.com](#)

**Fees:** \$2 subway; free beach admission

### Fire Island

Ocean Beach, NY

**The scene:** Barefeet, bicycles, red wagons, and an overabundance of brazen deer distinguish the dozen or so tiny communities that make up this laid back, (comparatively) unpretentious Hamptons-alternative. The Pines and Cherry Grove are legendarily gay; Point o' Woods is exclusive, and gated; Dunewood and Fair Harbor are family areas; and Ocean Beach is the biggest scene.

**Getting there:** Take Long Island Railroad from Penn station or David Brothers Taxi from Manhattan (68th St. and Third Ave. or 53rd St. and Second Ave.) to Bayshore, then take

ferry to Fire Island

**Travel time:** 2.5 hours

**Contact:** 631-289-4810; [nps.gov/fiis](#); Ferry: 516-666-3600; David Brothers Taxi: 631-665-4384

**Fees:** Ferry, \$13 one-way on weekday, \$9.50 one-way on weekend, \$14 for round-trip ferry; Taxi, \$18 one-way, \$21 one-way on holidays and Sundays; free beach admission

### Jacob Riis Park

From Beach 169th St. to Beach 149th St.

**The scene:** An eclectic mix of sun-seekers flock to Jacob Riis, a part of the Gateway National Recreation Area and essentially a shabbier extension of Rockaway Beach. The isolated east end has long been a prime gay pick-up spot.

**Getting there:** 2 to Flatbush Ave., Q35 Bus to Riis Beach

**Travel time:** 1-1.5 hours

**Contact:** 718-318-4300; [nps.gov/gate](#)

**Fees:** \$2 subway; free beach admission

### Jersey Shore

Ocean Ave., Asbury Park (Stretches from First to Eighth Aves. along Ocean Ave.)

**The scene:** The beaches of the much maligned Garden State may bring to mind rowdy crowds, funnel cake and skeeball, but not so Cape May: a serene throwback to Victorian times, with slate sidewalks lit by gaslight, period houses and antiques shops. The catch? It's

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located a good four to five hours away (by bus), at the southernmost tip of NJ.

**Getting there:** NJ Transit from Penn Station to Asbury Park

**Travel time:** 1 hour, 45 minutes

**Contact:** 732-775-0900; NJ Transit: 1-800-772-2222, njtransit.com

**Fees:** \$10.05 one-way; \$15.25 off-peak round-trip; beach admission, \$4 weekdays, \$5 weekends and holidays

**Cape May alternative:** NJ Transit Bus 319 direct from Port Authority to Cape May Transportation Center; \$29.45 roundtrip for adults, \$13.25 roundtrip for children and seniors



(Photo: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation)

### Jones Beach

Off the Wantagh Pkwy (South Shore of Long Island, roughly between the Wantagh and Meadowbrook Pkwy)

**The scene:** Best known for the amphitheater's annual big-name summer concert series, the beach itself draws crowds for its four miles of bike paths, a nature center, an Olympic-size pool, and a blissful "no radio" policy throughout.

**Getting there:** Long Island Railroad from Penn Station to Freeport, then transfer to Jones Beach shuttle bus

**Travel time:** 1 hour

**Contact:** nysparks.state.ny.us, 516-785-1600;

516-822-LIRR

**Fees:** Round-trip train and bus package, \$15 from Manhattan or Brooklyn, \$11 from Jamaica; beach admission: \$8 per day in summer; \$6 per day regular season; \$59 for season pass

### Long Beach

South shore of Long Island (Stretches from Maple Blvd. to Brookline Ave.)

**The scene:** A celebrity-studded resort in its early 20th century heyday, this five-mile pristine stretch of sand still has an historic boardwalk for rollerblading or cycling (which is lucky because there's no swimming allowed).

**Getting there:** Long Island Railroad Express from Penn Station

**Travel time:** 1 hour

**Contact:** 516-431-3890; 516-822-LIRR

**Fees:** Roundtrip train and beach admission package, \$17 from Manhattan or Brooklyn, \$14 from Jamaica; beach admission only, \$7

### Manhattan Beach

Oriental Blvd., Brooklyn (Stretches from Ocean Ave. to Mackenzie St., on eastern end of Coney Island)

**The scene:** Stately mansions surround this rather remote, quarter-mile strip of sand. The concrete promenade, while less impressive than those at Coney Island and Brighton Beach, merits a stroll.

**Getting there:** B, Q to Brighton Beach, then 5 minute bus ride on B1 Bus to Oriental Blvd.

**Travel time:** 1 hour

**Contact:** 718-946-1373

**Fees:** \$2 subway; free beach admission



(Photo: NPS)

### Orchard Beach

Pelham Bay Park at Orchard Beach Rd., the Bronx

**The scene:** Robert Moses's man-made, mile-long "Riviera of New York" comes with a hexagonal boardwalk; a bandshell for concerts; 26 courts for tennis, paddleball, and basketball; and the outlying, heavily wooded Pelham Bay, three times the size of Central Park.

**Getting there:** 6 to Pelham Bay, transfer to the Bx 12 bus to Orchard Beach

**Travel time:** 1.5 hours

**Contact:** 718-885-3273

**Fees:** \$2 subway fare; free beach admission

### Rockaway Beach

Beach 9th to 149th Sts., Rockaway Beach, Queens

**The scene:** A haven for handballers and surfers thanks to numerous handball courts and high, heaving waves, Rockaway runs the gamut from moneyed communities to housing developments to conservation areas.

**Getting there:** A to Broad Channel, transfer to the S to Rockaway Park-Beach 116th St.

**Travel time:** 1.5 hours

**Contact:** 718-318-4000; nycgovparks.org

**Fees:** \$2 subway; free beach admission

See also:  
[The Secret Queens Beach](#)

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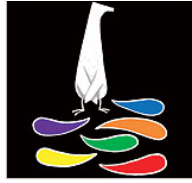
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