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New York's Secret Garden Guide: 11 Outdoor Dining Gems

By James Mulcahy

New Yorkers are notoriously starved for fresh air, and restaurants try to oblige their patrons' cravings for outdoor dining by stuffing seats on the curb, next to the dumpsters and pretty much on any patch of concrete that happens to be available. This fight to put tables in the open air is worth it when you discover that perfect hidden garden. The alfresco options in the slideshow below will transport you from the Big Apple's gritty streets to a peaceful piece of land where you can have a few drinks, enjoy dinner and forget that you're in a city of eight million people (about 75% of whom are also searching for that perfect outdoor dining experience). Click through to see our picks, and let us know about your favorite gardens in the comments.

Also, don't forget to vote for your favorite neighborhood gems in our NYC Everyday Eats survey, [which is live here right now](#).



Meatball Shop Williamsburg

While the Williamsburg location of the Meatball Shop is totally on the radar of diners looking for cheap, tasty bites in a bustling environment, the eatery quietly rolled out a new tented garden behind the space that will seat around 30 people. This is good news for diners on two fronts. First, who can argue with a little outdoor-dining action? Second, have you seen the crowds that flock to this joint? Any way to lessen the wait times is welcome, and these extra seats should do just that. Strings of lights illuminate the cozy group of tables, and windows let in scenes of the surrounding greenery. If you're looking to host a private party, meatball-style, this space can also be booked for events.

The Details: 170 Bedford Ave. 718-551-0520