

BEYOND THE SESSIONS

A Conference Companion



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ISSUE 01

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About This Guide

We'd like to introduce you to Issue 01 of Beyond the Sessions, a companion curated by the NCURA Region II Community! We hope this resource is helpful for making most of your time in New York City during the NCURA Annual Meeting. Most recommendations in this guide are walkable from the New York Hilton Midtown. For destinations farther downtown, uptown, or across town, we've noted when subway or taxi/rideshare may be a better option. Please enjoy and we can't wait to meet you in the Big Apple!

Key:

🚶 Walkable

🚇 Subway recommended

🚗 Taxi/rideshare recommended



Take a bite out of the Big Apple

Midtown Manhattan is home to every cuisine you could think of, from classic American fare to creative Asian fusion, and everything imaginable in between. Don't forget to take advantage of Restaurant Week menus that many establishments offer for lunch or dinner.

La Grande Boucherie

55th St between 6th and 5th Ave

🚶 5 min walk

La Grande Boucherie is known for its classic French cuisine and striking Parisian-inspired ambiance. From timeless favorites like French onion soup to escargots, the menu offers guests the opportunity to experience the rich and distinctive flavors of France. For those looking to step outside their comfort zone, it is an ideal place to discover unique, memorable, and flavorful dishes.

Mastro's

52nd St between 6th and 7th Ave

🚶 6–8 min walk

Mastro's is an upscale Manhattan dining destination known for its premium steaks, elegant ambiance, and exceptional service. A popular choice for special occasions, it also features fresh seafood, an extensive wine list, and a sophisticated menu that elevates classic steakhouse fare. To end the meal on a

memorable note, the restaurant's signature butter cake is a standout favorite and a must-try dessert.

Il Gattopardo

54th St between 6th and 5th Ave

🚶 4–5 min walk

Il Gattopardo is a renowned Manhattan restaurant known for its classic Italian cuisine and expertly crafted cocktails. Specializing in the vibrant flavors of Southern Italy, it offers a thoughtfully prepared menu made with high-quality ingredients. Its warm lighting and elegant setting create a calm, inviting atmosphere, making it an ideal place to unwind after a long day.

Oodles of Noodles



Quality *
Italian

57 W 57th St

🚶 6–8 min walk

This is the place to get your Italian fix. The menu offers everything from comforting pasta dishes to Florentine steak. Going with a friend? Share the chicken parm that is served like a pizza!

Ippudo Westside

321 W 51st St (Between 8th and 9th Ave)

🚶 15–18 min walk / 🚗 8–10 min

A cult favorite from Japan, Ippudo is especially known for its ramen and pork buns. It's a great option for grabbing a bite before or after a show.





Savored Sips

Where to venture when you need that extra boost of serotonin in the form of caffeine or sugar (or both).

Levain Bakery

Do you have a sweet tooth? Why not try Levain Bakery's famous 6-ounce chocolate chip walnut cookie? Not quite your style? Levain Bakery has a treat for everyone! Taste the result of over 30 years of baking! There are multiple locations around Manhattan so take the subway or walk to discover a new part of the city.

Venchi Chocolate

Needing a sugar fix but don't want to travel far? Venchi is a mere 3 minute walk from the Hilton Midtown. An Italian favorite that specializes in gianduja (chocolate hazelnut deliciousness), they also offer a variety of bonbons and indulgent gelato.

La Colombe Coffee Workshop

Needing some caffeine and to stretch your legs? Take a 15 minute walk to La Colombe. Started in Philadelphia, La Colombe is known for its nitro lattes on tap and seasonal flavors.

A Broadway Show

Manhattan’s Theater District between 41st-54th St on or near Broadway 🚶 10–15 min walk

What’s a trip to New York City without seeing a Broadway show? One of the city’s most iconic experiences, Broadway offers world-class performances, dazzling musicals, and unforgettable storytelling in the heart of the Theater District. Whether you choose a beloved classic or a new hit musical, attending a show is a must-do activity that perfectly captures the excitement and energy of the city.

Examples: Hamilton, The Lion King, Wicked, Oh, Mary

Cheap Broadway Tickets:

The cheapest way to get Broadway tickets is by purchasing same-day Rush or Lottery tickets, or by visiting a TKTS booth for up to 50% off. To avoid online service fees, you can also buy standard tickets directly at the show's physical box office. The easiest is the TKTS booth located in Times Square.

“Everything is beautiful at the ballet.” -A Chorus Line

New York City certainly does not lack much in terms of the entertainment scene. From award-winning Broadway productions to world-renowned museums, there is nowhere else in the world as vibrant as NYC.

Natural History Museum

200 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024 🚇
20–25 min subway / 🚗 15–20 min One of Manhattan’s most iconic cultural attractions, the American Museum of Natural History offers an engaging experience for visitors of all ages. Located on the Upper West Side, the museum invites guests to take a quiet stroll around the building and immerse yourself in the exhibits; it is never too late to learn something new!

Metropolitan Museum of Art

1000 5th Ave
🚗 15–20 min / 🚇 25–30 min subway
The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of New York City’s most iconic landmarks, featuring a vast collection that spans

centuries and cultures. From ancient artifacts to European paintings and decorative arts, The Met offers a grand, wide-ranging experience. Unlike MoMA’s focus on modern and contemporary art, The Met provides a more classical and historical look at art and culture.

Comedy Cellar

117 MacDougal St, New York, NY 10012
🚇 20–25 min by subway / 🚗 15–20 min taxi

Looking for a good chuckle? Go to the world’s famous Comedy Cellar! Lineups are usually posted on Thursdays for the following weekend to ensure they have the best acts available! The sister showroom, the Fat Black Pussycat is also an option and great destination for late night hangouts!



Among the Picassos

How to spend a day at MoMA



If you want a break from the fast pace of the city, MoMA is the perfect place to step inside and feel inspired. Packed with bold, imaginative, and recognizable works, the museum offers an engaging and worthwhile experience for both serious art lovers and casual visitors alike.

Not sure what to check out? Here is what a senior product manager at MoMA suggests:

Artwork highlights:

Van Gogh's The Starry Night

Monet's Water Lilies

Marcel Duchamp exhibit on the 6th floor –
"Featuring some 300 artworks, this exhibition marks the first retrospective of the artist's work in the United States since 1973"

The Modern Bar Room (more affordable than
The Modern dining room, but still feels special)

Terrace cafe (6th floor, feels hidden and exclusive, excellent house-made potato chips and French onion dip)

Cafe 2 (2nd floor, adjacent to the store, banquet seating, great for lunch or a coffee break)
Espresso Bar (2nd floor across from the store. If available, try a scoop of Van Dough ice cream!)

The sculpture garden as a nice place to rest and enjoy some sculpture and outdoor art, drink an iced beverage, and just relax.

11 W 53rd Street 🚶 4 min walk

MoMA is open daily 10:30 -5:30 and stays open until 8:30 on Fridays.

Tickets can be purchased ahead of time at [visit.moma.org/select](https://www.moma.org/select)

The Perfect Night Out

Blue Note NYC

131 W 3rd St, New York, NY 10012

🚇 20–25 min by subway / 🚗 15–20 min taxi

The Blue Note is a jazz club that has been around for over 40 years in New York City! Located in Greenwich Village, its goal is to treat deserving artists with respect while providing patrons with the opportunity to experience some of the finest jazz musicians in the world in a close and comfortable setting. Anything can happen at this club, who knows, maybe you will be lucky enough to see Stevie Wonder or Tony Bennett on stage when they get called up from the audience

Highkey Rainforest Rooftop

Blatt St 29th floor, New York, NY 10038

🚇 25–30 min by subway / 🚗 20–25 min taxi

Highkey Rainforest Rooftop is in the Financial District, and is on the 29th floor of the building where it is located. It's a lush escape from the city that offers breathtaking views with an environment filled with vibrant greenery and exotic flowers. If you love taking pictures, or enjoying a unique dining experience, this is the place to go! It's a great opportunity for a tranquil retreat amidst the urban bustle. Prohibition

503 Columbus Ave, New York, NY 10024

🚇 20–25 min by subway / 🚗 15–20 min taxi

An Upper West Side neighborhood icon for

30 years, the venue transports guests into the new "Roaring 20's" once one steps foot into the place. With live music, a variety of dining options, and great drink choices, it is sure to be a merry place to be at. There is also the option of a more intimately speakeasy room in the back, behind the welcoming, big red door.

City Winery NYC

25th Ave, New York, NY 10011 🚇 20–25

min by subway / 🚗 15–20 min taxi

Situated on the Hudson River at Pier 57, step into NYC's Urban Wine Country. Not only is there World-Class Wine, but there is also Live Music with Intimate Concerts & Comedy while you also enjoy some great cuisine! Go to the tasting room before the shows for a flight of wines and have a blast at the bar after the show! The City Winery can be a memorable night out for just two, or an unforgettable private event with many of your peers!





Worth the Walk

Looking to stay active and discover traditional New York pastimes? The city offers plenty of ways to enjoy its energy beyond the usual sightseeing. Whether you prefer something relaxing or a bit more adventurous, these activities offer a memorable way to experience New York like a local.

[Row Boat Rentals in Central Park](#) 🚶 25–30 min walk / 🚣 10–15 min

Central Park Boathouse on E 72nd St and East Drive

Want to get a scenic view of central park on the water? Rent out a boat with a friend or two and row your way around. This classy and relaxing New York experience is well worth adding to your personal itinerary. A charming way to slow down, enjoy the surrounding view, and experience one of the city's most timeless activities.

[Koreatown](#) 10–15 min subway / 🚣 10–15 min / 🚶 30 min
W 32nd St between Broadway and 5th Ave Koreatown offers an endless variety of dining options, from all-you-can-eat Korean barbecue spots like Let's Meat to traditional Korean Pochas serving classic comfort dishes and late-night favorites. Beyond the food, the neighborhood also offers plenty of entertainment, including lively karaoke venues where visitors can unwind and enjoy a fun night out.

[Statue of Liberty](#) 🚶 25–30 min by subway

You can see the Statue of Liberty many ways: by water, by air, by tour. The cheapest way is to take a ride on the Staten Island Ferry for FREE that leaves from the Battery Park Terminal in NYC's Financial District. The Staten Island Ferry is a completely free, 25-minute commuter and sightseeing ferry operated by the NYC DOT that runs 5.2 miles across New York Harbor between Manhattan and Staten Island. It offers unmatched, free views of the Statue of Liberty and the Manhattan skyline.

[Coney Island](#) 🚶 60–75 min by subway

From roller-coasters to go-karts, to live entertainment and boardwalk games, beachfront Coney Island has it all! The birthplace of the amusement park, Coney Island is home to an aquarium, action-packed rides, restaurants, shops, and more. Coney Island has something for everyone and is a perfect hangout spot for a summer day!

[Pulsd NYC](#)

If none of the above interest you, and you have some niche interests, Pulsd NYC will be your go-to source for everything in New York! Discover unique experiences in dining, entertainment, and cultural events such as cruises, tastings, DJ nights, art shows and festivals! Whatever it is, Pulsd will showcase the best upcoming events in NYC! Find discount vouchers for everything from brunches/dinners to events & spas and more. Visit the website or download the app!



THE LONG RUN:

Resilience in Research Administration

NCURA REGION II 2026 REGIONAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 8-11, SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

Coming next: Issue 02 Saratoga Springs November 2026

Scan the QR code for more information!



SCAN ME

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