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Cybertrips: Get out of Manhattan to hit the beach

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By Roger Petterson, Associated Press

OK, you've been to New York City, you've seen this and done that and been just about everywhere the tourist guides tout. But you may have missed one of its more colorful spots, Brooklyn's Coney Island. And if you keep heading east, past Brooklyn, Queens and the city limits to suburban Long Island, you'll find beautiful beaches and harbor villages. (Related story: [Fun on a budget: Big Apple's bargain bites](#))



Coney Island classic: Opened in 1927, the famous Cyclone roller coaster still delights thrill seekers today.

The amusement park was practically invented at Coney Island (www.coneyisland.com) the home of Astroland Park and the famous Cyclone roller coaster, hot dog eating contests and the Mermaid Parade. You'll need to click on "Tourist Information" to see how you get there from Manhattan, and then look through the "Coney Island Museum" and the "Circus Sideshow" to get an idea of what makes the place unique.

Explore some of its colorful past at Coney Island History (naid.sppsr.ucla.edu/coneyisland) full of articles on its early rides and attractions. This Web site hasn't been updated in a while but it's still a good source of historical details on the place where, according to the "Timeline," the world's first roller coaster opened in 1884.


You can walk from the amusement parks to the New York Aquarium (www.nyaquarium.com) home of thousands of sea creatures, including seals and sea lions.

Coney Island is in Brooklyn, which is part of New York City, along with neighboring Queens. East of Queens you are no longer in the city, but rather in the suburbs of Long Island, which stretches about 100 miles into the Atlantic.

Visit the Long Island Convention & Visitors Bureau (www.funonli.com) and click on "About Long Island" to learn about the five major regions, starting with the South Shore and the beaches stretching along the Atlantic shore. The

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South Shore combined with the North Shore, which faces Long Island Sound, give the Island hundreds of miles of beachfront. You can pick up details on some of these sandy stretches, including the Fire Island National Seashore and Jones Beach State Park, as well as the area's many other public spaces by clicking on "Beaches & Parks."

Stay with the CVB's "About" guide and see why you'll want to explore the distant North Fork, with its harbor villages and rural atmosphere, and the tony South Fork, commonly called the Hamptons, where the rich and famous chill out.

The CVB Web site also has detailed guides to outdoor fun and other things to do, from prowling through antique stores to catching a ride on an ocean fishing charter. And at the bottom of the "What to Do" list, check out Long Island's many wineries.

If you don't want to rent a car and brave the metro area's traffic, the Long Island Rail Road (www.lirr.org/lirr) can take you from Manhattan's Penn Station to the beach towns, the North Shore and all the way out to Montauk on the far east end.


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