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SOHO-AN ECLECTIC ENCLAVE OF NEW YORK HOUSING, HOTSPOTS AND HISTORY

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This hip area of Manhattan is home to celebrities and artists. Its cobblestone streets, eclectic atmosphere, trendy restaurants, shops and art galleries make this section a place to be and be seen. From Canal Street to Houston and from Lafayette to the Hudson River, this neighborhood is said to have the largest collection of cast iron structures in the world.

The area has a colorful past which only adds to its creative flavor and vibrant vibe. The early 1800s brought in a number of middle-class and elite residents. Theaters, shops, casinos, bars and brothels sprung up. In the mid 1800s, this area had more bars and brothels than any other part of New York City and for a period of time was known as Hell's Hundred Acres because there were several fires. Developers built industrial and commercial buildings after the Civil War and several were constructed with

wrought iron. Import/export factories, textile houses and “rag trade” clothing stores were the focus of Soho during this time.

Some of those large spaces and huge windows in those architectural masterpieces still stand today and have been renovated into shops and living spaces. The 1950s brought in

artists who rented the spaces illegally and by the 1960s and 70s, developers began to notice that this fun, funky place could be a big draw for those who liked its rather sketchy, yet creative history.

Historical landmark buildings include The Little Singer Building which was once a office and factory space. In the late 70s, it was converted into co-ops and office spaces. This Art Nouveau building dates back to the early 1900s and sits at Broadway, South of Prince Street.

Mercer Kitchen 147 Mercer Street / Photography by Shiri Kornowski
Soho is one of the most expensive areas to live in New York City. There’s the huge lofts, condos and co-ops within historical buildings and new ones, recently built, some of which take a cue from that architecture. There’s ten luxury lofts and two penthouses at 151 Wooster that was once a plumbing building, but Soho Mews at 311 West Broadway and luxury condos at 50 West Broadway are sleek and modern.

For shopping, there’s Dolce and Gabbana, Burberry, Bloomingdales, Prada and Chanel. Local hotspots are Milady’s and Fanelli’s, two of Soho’s oldest bars. There’s the New Museum of Contemporary Art at 583 Broadway and The New York City Fire Museum at 278 Spring Street that’s a converted 1900s firehouse. For off-Broadway plays, Soho has about six or seven venues to choose from.

Oscar de la Renta, Mike Myers, and Whoopi Goldberg are just a few of the rich and famous that call or have called Soho home, but

it's not unusual to catch a celebrity out shopping or staying in one of Soho's trendy, upscale hotels. Trump Soho is a hotel and



condominium building on 246 Spring Street that's a 46-story glass tower right in the middle of all the action in Soho.

From industrialists to bohemians to chic celebrities, artists and Wall Street workers, Soho's charm is its diverse past and present. Soho has an attitude and those who live there believe this section is the heart and soul of New York. Its survival and adaptation to change has made it one of New York City's most coveted locations.



SoHo New York City / Photography by Shiri Kornowski

Take a look at [New York Architecture](#). It's a great site to explore Soho's history (and other areas of NYC) with beautiful pictures depicting the history of Soho.