

Chelsea's hottest hotspots!



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Get out of the cafe! Thanks to free outdoor Wi-Fi in Chelsea, now you'll never have to settle for coffee — and fight over a table or an electrical outlet — at Starbucks again. It's the first totally Wi-Fi'd nabe in Manhattan, thanks to Chelsea Improvement Company, which partnered with Google to wire the area from 14th and 19th streets and Eighth and 11th avenues.

We checked out a few of the best places to hang out and wire up — and nearby spots where you can fuel up on treats and cool drinks.

1. High Line

15th Street and 10th Avenue

The Wi-Fi doesn't reach most of the elevated park, but the area around 15th Street is a sweet spot — Web pages load as fast as if you were at home or in your office. The only downside is that the area lacks shade, making it difficult to read a screen on sunny days.

But stay far away from this tourist-laden park on weekends if you hope to snag any kind of seating. Instead, check out the former elevated railway during the week, when the park's much quieter. Or head one flight down and seek solace in the shade over a glass of vino at Terroir on the Porch, a seasonal outpost of the popular wine bar scheduled to reopen for the season May 3.

Wired but tired?: Chelsea Market is nearby, so head to carb-lover's heaven Amy's Bread (75 Ninth Ave.; 212-462-4338, amysbread.com), and pick up a lunchbox to go (\$14.50). Enough for two, it includes a sandwich (such as goat cheese on a baguette with tomato, eggplant, black olive tapenade and fresh thyme), a cookie (chocolate chip or a more adventurous lime cornmeal), fruit, drink and potato chips.

2. 14TH Street Park

14th Street, between 10th and 11th avenues

Take in views of the Hudson River and Hoboken — with its clock tower looming to the southwest — and spread a blanket on the verdant lawn of this oval-shape park tucked between 10th and 11th avenues. Despite the hustle-bustle of uptown traffic whizzing by, it's a far calmer alternative to the tourist-clogged High Line. The only foot traffic tends to be children riding their mini-bikes or a jogger on his way to the Hudson River running path. Mostly, friends and couples choose to chat quietly over coffee while sitting in orange folding chairs at steel-gray tables lining the park's perimeter. On a typical spring weekend afternoon, only about half the chairs are full, and there's plenty of lawn space. The only downside? Again, a lack of shade, making it difficult to read computer screens.

Wired but tired? Grab an iced coffee (\$4) from the city's caffeine kings at Blue Bottle (450 W. 15th St.), across the street from Chelsea Market.

3. Gansevoort Triangle

Southeast corner of Gansevoort and Little West 12th streets

Technically, the cobblestone plaza comprising the Gansevoort Triangle includes a strip of public seating along Ninth Avenue between 13th and 14th streets — but the biggest and best seating is further south, near Little West 12th Street. It's quieter than the public seating around 14th Street (and its busy street traffic), and the round black tables are spaced farther apart, too —

so you have plenty of room to work without the distraction of listening to a neighbor's conversation. For many New Yorkers who work in the neighborhood, such as 25-year-old Jared Davis, the area offers a warm-weather respite from the office. "If the sun's out, I'm probably outside!" says recruiter Davis, who lives in Williamsburg.

Wired but tired? Grab a cappuccino (\$4) or an organic juice — such as one made with beet, apple, cherry and carrot (\$9) from Kava Cafe (803 Washington St.; 212-255-7495, kavanyc.com), a sleek Italian-style espresso bar and a neighborhood favorite. Celebs like Philip Seymour Hoffman and Hugh Jackman also flock to the joint — and for good reason: Although the coffee is a draw, the food is just as much of a standout. Dig into scrambled egg, goat cheese and avocado on a potato and onion roll (\$7), or salads — like a frisee, escarole and fennel mélange topped with candied walnuts and fig vinaigrette (\$10).

4. Chelsea Triangle

North side of 14th Street and Ninth Avenue

You might be hard-pressed to find seating here under a gray umbrella — most of the 10 or so tables are full during the afternoons. But you will find a strong signal, and Web pages load lightning-fast.

It's partly why English expat Sarah-Jane Purvis chose the locale for a 4 p.m. Skype date she scheduled with her fellow Brits across the pond. Instead of rushing back to her Upper East Side apartment after a trip to the nearby Apple store, she found herself in the perfect spot for an online chat. "The fact that I can sit here and speak with my friends back in England is great," says the 31-year-old publicist. "I didn't want to have to go home and do it. And it's just lovely that I can sit outside."

Wired but tired? Le Pain Quotidien's kiosk at the southern end of the triangle (lepainquotidien.com) is perfect for grabbing an iced coffee (\$3.59) and a berry muffin (right) or another sweet treat.

I came, I saw, iPad-ed

Get outside with free wireless at parks all over NYC

Prospect Park

Picnic House, Prospect Park West and Fifth Street

Pack a snack and your iPad, and head to Brooklyn's largest park, where gratis Wi-Fi is available at the Picnic House (closest entrance is on Prospect Park West near Fifth Street in Park Slope; take the F to the Prospect Park station), and in the area surrounding it.

Bryant Park

Between 40th and 42nd streets, along Sixth Avenue

The city's first wired park has boasted free Wi-Fi since 2002. The lawn and the tables near the New York Public Library are always swarming with tourists and Midtown corporate types, so be prepared to battle for a spot at lunchtime during the warm-weather months.

Battery Park

State Street and Battery Place

The park's Bosque area, a 53,000-square-foot garden with fragrant blooming buds among 140 London plane trees, is a peaceful work setting located at the southernmost tip of Manhattan. Gaze out at the Hudson River and the Statue of Liberty in the distance. Table Green, a food kiosk located just south of Castle Clinton, offers sustenance such as Blue Marble ice cream, local beer, wine and fruit.

Brooklyn Bridge Park

Entrance at Old Fulton and Furman streets

Take advantage of free Wi-Fi at Pier 1, where from the Harbor View and Bridge View lawns you can read your newsfeed and drink in East River views of the South Street Seaport, Lower Manhattan and the iconic bridge after which the park is named. For a more serene scene, stroll about 15 minutes due south to Pier 6. A slew of snacks including California-style Mexican food from Calxico (at the Main Street Entrance at Plymouth Street), juicy lobster rolls from Luke's (in the Smokestack Building) and a scoop from the Brooklyn Ice Cream Factory (at Old Fulton and Water streets) are welcome pick-me-ups.