



A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO

# Red Hook Brooklyn

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## Maritime History Nuggets from PortSide New York:

Up to 1840s: the big names in Brooklyn Heights had their farms here.

1850

Dutch name "Roed Hook" (Red Hook) referred to the red soil. Much of Red Hook was once water or marsh. You could row from Erie Basin to what is now Coffey Park. This accounts for many flooding cellars today.

1840s thru 1880s: Red Hook's first real estate boom. Then as now, the waterfront drives the frenzy. Two manmade bays are built, Atlantic Basin and Erie Basin. Latter is terminus for barges from the Erie Canal which bring huge amounts of Midwestern goods. Warehouses, granaries, mills, refineries, piers and shipyards are constructed to hold and process these goods. Red Hook is fully urbanized by the 1870s; most brick homes here predate brownstones inland.

1900

1920s-1950s: Red Hook gets its tough reputation. Poverty and crime bloom due to overcrowding, economic bustle and waterfront corruption. During the Depression, a Hooverville (shantytown) sprawls where the ballfields and pool are today. Al Capone gets his start here, and his famous scar, before moving to Chicago. During the 50s, the writers of the movie "On the Waterfront" do their research here. During WWII shipyards boom. Todd, where IKEA will be located, employs 20,000 workers.

1950

In the early 1990s, the Port Authority sells most of its piers, and small scale manufacturers, marine businesses, and artsy homesteaders begin refurbishing spaces there and inland. By 2000, the word "waterfront" is real estate gold in NYC, and the rush is on to buy here. A Fairway Market, an IKEA and a cruise terminal are all approved during a three year period.

2000

1970s: NYC hits the skids, and Red Hook does even worse since most shipping is moved to NJ due to containerization, and Port Authority plans for a containerport here condemn much land but then don't deliver a port. The Port Authority holds onto piers for some twenty years without using them, and Red Hook decays from water's edge to inland, becoming a no-go area for most New Yorkers by the 80s.

## Directions

### Subway/Bus Directions

Take the B-61 bus towards Downtown Brooklyn and get off at the corner of Jay and Willoughby where you can take the A, C, F, 2, 3, 4, or 5 trains. Another option is to take the B-61 to the corner of Court and Atlantic Street where you can catch the M, N, and R trains. You can also catch the B-77 to Smith and 9th Street where you can catch the F train.

### From the Brooklyn Bridge

Continue straight across bridge staying in the middle or left lanes and proceed several blocks to Atlantic Ave. Turn right onto Atlantic Avenue going west to the waterfront. At the end of Atlantic Avenue, turn left onto Columbia Street. Make your second right on Sackett St. Go one block and turn left onto Van Brunt St.



RMC Canvas and Rope workers circa 1950. The Red Hook dockworkers made ship fenders from braided rope.

### From the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel

After paying toll, take exit marked Hamilton Ave straight ahead and on the right. Proceed on Hamilton to first Light. Turn left at light and make a U-Turn on Hamilton under the green overpass. Be careful not to enter the tunnel on your immediate left. Proceed on Hamilton going under all green overpasses, staying in the middle to the end. (Stay in middle as Brooklyn Battery Tunnel entrance is on the left and entrances to BQE and Hicks St. are on the right.) At the stop light at the end of Hamilton Turn left on Van Brunt.

### Verazanno Bridge

Take 278 E/ BQE Exit. Proceed towards the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel on 278E/BQE to the Hamilton Ave Exit 26B. Proceed on Hamilton going under all green overpasses to the end. Stay in middle as Brooklyn Battery Tunnel entrance is on the left and entrances to BQE and Hicks St. are on the right. At the stop light at the end of Hamilton Turn left on Van Brunt.



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# Experience Red Hook



## Neighborhood Map Key

### Food & Drink

- |    |   |                         |
|----|---|-------------------------|
| 1  | 360   | 360 Van Brunt Street    |
| 2  | Added Value Farmer's Market                       | Van Dyke & Ostego Sts.  |
| 3  | Baked (Bakery & Café)                             | 359 Van Brunt Street    |
| 4  | Blue Whiting Restaurant/<br>Sandwich Shop         | 289 Van Brunt Street    |
| 5  | Defonte's Sandwich Shop                           | 379 Columbia Street     |
| 6  | El Huipil Restaurant (Mexican Food)               | 116A Sullivan Street    |
| 7  | Fairway Supermarket                               | 480 Van Brunt Street    |
| 8  | Hope & Anchor (American Diner)                    | 347 Van Brunt Street    |
| 9  | Latin Food Carts                                  | Corner of Bay & Clinton |
| 10 | Liberty Heights Tap Room                          | 34 Van Dyke Street      |
| 11 | Six Points Craft Ale Brewery                      | 34 Van Dyke Street      |
| 12 | Marks Pizza                                       | 326 Van Brunt Street    |
| 13 | Red Hook Bait & Tackle Bar                        | 320 Van Brunt Street    |
| 14 | Red Hook Café & Grill                             | 228 Van Brunt Street    |
| 15 | Red Hook Coffee Shop                              | 327 Van Brunt Street    |
| 16 | Red Hook's Finest Deli & Catering                 | 277A Van Brunt Street   |
| 17 | Steve's Key Lime Pies (at Pier 41)                | 204 Van Dyke Street     |
| 18 | Sunny's   | 253 Conover Street      |
| 19 | The Good Fork                                     | 393 Van Brunt Street    |
| 20 | The Pioneer Bar-B-Q<br>(Restaurant & Beer Garden) | 318 Van Brunt Street    |

### Parks & Museums

- |    |  |                      |
|----|--|----------------------|
| 21 | Waterfront Museum & Barge, and Park    | 299 Conover Street   |
| 22 | Coffee Park                            | See Map              |
| 23 | Red Hook Recreational Fields           | See Map              |
| 24 | Valentino Memorial Park & Fishing Pier | End of Coffey Street |

### Shops & Galleries

- |    |  |                          |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 25 | Atlantis...Found<br>(Antiques, Eclectics and Refurbishing) | 351 Van Brunt Street     |
| 26 | Kentler International Drawing Space<br>(Art Gallery)       | 353 Van Brunt Street     |
| 27 | LeNell's Wine & Spirit Boutique                            | 416 Van Brunt Street     |
| 28 | Luce on the Hook (Clothing Boutique)                       | 281 Van Brunt Street     |
| 29 | Pier Glass (Handcrafted Glassworks)                        | 499 Van Brunt Street #2A |

### Services

- |    |   |                      |
|----|---|----------------------|
| 30 | Chase Bank  | 79 Hamilton Avenue   |
| 31 | Red Hook Pharmacy<br>(Pharmacy, Fax, Money Order) | 376 Van Brunt Street |
| 32 | Independence Bank                                 | 498 Columbia Street  |

Special Thanks To:  
Honorable Sara M. Gonzalez  
NYC Council - District 38



www.visitbrooklyn.org  
Brooklyn Borough President  
Marty Markowitz

