

# CITY LIVING



## +FIND IT

**RED HOOK**, a peninsula in Brooklyn, is bounded by the Gowanus Canal, Gowanus Bay, the Buttermilk Channel and Hamilton Avenue/Gowanus Expressway.



A quaint home on Pioneer Street in Red Hook

### REAL ESTATE

#### To buy

**\$549,000**

Two-unit frame row house with two floor-though apartments, high ceilings and some original detail. 1,480 square feet, near the waterfront. 137 Dwight St.

CONTACT: BETH KENKEL THE CORCORAN GROUP, 917-543-2115

**\$390,000**

Two-bedroom, one-bath co-op in newly constructed eco-friendly building. 79 Wolcott St.

CONTACT: MARY GAGLIO, FRANK P. MANZIONE REAL ESTATE, 917-750-0801

#### To rent

**\$2,000**

Two-bedroom, one-bath apartment with private patio, 850 square feet, Coffey Street.

**\$1,400**

One-bedroom apartment with one full and two partial baths, 650 square feet, Dikeman Street.

CONTACT: MARY GAGLIO, FRANK P. MANZIONE REAL ESTATE, 917-750-0801

## Growing pains haven't halted its transformation

BY LANA BORTOLOTT  
Special to amNewYork

Surrounded by water and cut off by the Gowanus Expressway as well as its lack of subway service, Red Hook enjoys a natural isolation.

But that hasn't stopped people from discovering its charms.

First, artists came for the space and the light. Then, in no particular order, came Fairway, a swath of excellent restaurants, a smattering of retail shops and the biggest, loudest newcomer of them all: Ikea.

Growing pains notwithstanding, the neighborhood is moving forward, infused by state grants to refurbish Van Brunt Street, the main dining and shopping corridor.

Residents and merchants share a fierce dedication to improving Red Hook's quality of life.

"There's a spirit here that comes from the businesses themselves," said Elizabeth Demetriou, director of revitalization and development at Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corp. "The synergy between the businesses is very unique to Red Hook."



Visitors enjoy lunch on Red Hook's revitalized waterfront behind Fairway. (PHOTOS: KATYA PRONIN)

### +Did you know?

Red Hook, or "Roode Hoek" as it was once known, takes its name from the color of its soil and the shape of its shoreline.

Florence Neal, an artist who has lived here since 1987, moved her studio from Dumbo because she "wanted to be in a community where you could make



David Sharps runs the pioneering Waterfront Museum.

a difference."

She said her neighborhood is a sleeper.

"It took years for Red Hook not to be a bad name. It was known as a rough and

### THE BUZZ

Two of Red Hook's nonprofit organizations have events. The Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition exhibition, with local and affordable works, runs weekends through Oct. 25 at 499 Van Brunt St. Added Value will host its Harvest Festival Oct. 24, a daylong celebration of health and wellness, and the creation of community through sustainable development.

hard place, but a number of people knew otherwise and moved here, and fortunately other people are coming here," she said.

Increasing confidence in the area, however, also portends rising rents.

Still, lack of a subway and other services has thwarted out-of-scale residential development, to the relief of many.

John Strohbeen, a 14-year resident and president of the Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, noted Red Hook has become a safer place to live, but is concerned that higher rents will drive artists out.

"There used to be burned-out cars on my block, but now there are BMWs," he said.

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## TO SHOP

**Erie Basin**388 Van Brunt St.,  
718-554-6147

You'll feel as though you stepped into someone's parlor when you visit this exquisitely curated shop featuring 19th-century jewelry, objects, furniture and mirrors.

**Metal and Thread**398 Van Brunt St.,  
718-414-9651

Longtime Lower East Side artists Denise Carbonell and Derek Dominy moved their studio and home to Red Hook and opened their first storefront gallery. In addition to their own works, they showcase other locals' goods, such as jewelry, hats, lamps, wireworks and more.

**Foxy and Winston**392 Van Brunt St.,  
718-928-4855

This brand new shop — formerly a candy store — now specializes in charming silk-screened infant and children's clothing displayed on the candy shop's original shelves. Artist and owner Jane Buck's animal designs appear on organic,

**Metal and Thread is a veritable treasure chest of strange and beautiful items.** (KATYA PRONIN)**+Did you know?**

The B61 bus route was formerly a trolley line, a few cars of which are on the waterfront.

around for 17 years, but the alchemic mysteries of glass are now front and center in a two-year-old showroom, which includes unique enameled and glass tableware and art.

**Red Lipstick Boutique**390 Van Brunt St.,  
718-344-7196

Newly transplanted from a 10-year run in Prospect Heights, this women's boutique specializes in practical and affordable fashion, including owner Staceyjoy Elkin's own knitwear.

unbleached clothing, wall hangings and recycled-paper stationery.

**Flickinger Glassworks**204-207 Van Dyke St.,  
Pier 41, 718-875-1531

The studio has been

You'll get  
**'Hooked' on the views**

David Sharps is the founder of the Waterfront Museum, a former working barge that is now open to the public.

**What's great about Red Hook?**

The light, the open space and the views of the working harbor.

**What's not so great?**

Historic preservation is a very hard fight, but I hate to see us

lose cobblestone streets and historic buildings. I'd hate to see our waterfront become the Red Hook mall.

**What's a good way to spend a day in Red Hook?**

Get out into the water by way of Red Hook Boaters. And come for the sunsets. There are very few places where you can see such spectacular sunsets.

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## TO EAT

**home/made**293 Van Brunt St.,  
347-223-4135

Owners Monica Byrne and Leisah Swenson transplanted their wine bar to a larger, brighter space adorned with lilies and paintings. The impressive wine list features mostly small producers, and the menu offers salads, cheese and charcuterie.

**Kevin's**277A Van Brunt St.,  
718-596-8335

Caroline Parker and Kevin Moore change the menu weekly but stick to seasonal, local fare. Whether from the farm or the sea — Moore has been known to dig his own clams, which he serves in a saffron-infused fish stew — the dishes are simple and fresh.

**Hope & Anchor**347 Van Brunt St.,  
718-237-0276

This is an American diner that's both hipster- and family-friendly. The menu features the requisite mac and cheese along with un-diner-like fare such as smoked duck salad and fish



Baked on Van Brunt Street has Stumptown coffee and inventive sweets. (PHOTOS: KATYA PRONIN)

tacos. Thursday to Saturday nights, come in for drag queen karaoke.

**The Good Fork**391 Van Brunt St.,  
718-643-6636

No longer a quiet gem, this homey bistro has gained recognition throughout the five boroughs — and for good reason. There's a fanatic dedication to locally seasonal food, which comes

off as earnest rather than righteous.

**Fort Defiance**365 Van Brunt St.,  
347-453-6672

Nothing is too complicated at Van Brunt's newest cafe — its owner once lived in the Big Easy and he brings to Red Hook simple New Orleans-influenced fare. The standout: the perfect muffuletta sandwich.

**+Did you know?**

Red Hook was the setting for Arthur Miller's play "A View From the Bridge."

**Baked**359 Van Brunt St.,  
718-222-0345

The closest thing Red Hook has to a hangout coffee shop, Baked offers pastries, sandwiches and Stumptown coffee. Come for the java, but stay for the inventive sweets.

## TO SEE

**Waterfront Museum**290 Conover St.,  
718-624-4719

This rescued and restored barge is now an interactive museum afloat on Pier 44. Owner, captain and curator David Sharps, a former cruise line performer, opens it to the public on Thursday afternoons and Saturdays (and by appointment).



Check out nautical curiosities in the house at 26 Reed St.



Fort Defiance is a cafe with a New Orleans feel.

**Kentler International Drawing Space**353 Van Brunt St.,  
718-875-2098

One of Red Hook's oldest storefront studios, the gallery shows local artworks and hosts free family art workshops on Saturdays, led by professional teaching artists. Drop-ins are welcome, but it's advisable to register in advance.

**Valentino Pier**

Coffey Street at the pier

Red Hook Boaters uses this nicely landscaped pier as its launch for free kayak and canoe excursions. Come here for full-on views of the Statue of Liberty as well as Governors Island, Manhattan's skyline, Staten Island and the New York Harbor.

**Coffey Park**

Bounded by King, Richards, Verona, Dwight and Pioneer streets

London plane trees and other gracious plantings distinguish this lovely eight-acre park, where it's not uncommon to stumble across a local dance theater group performance.

## TO PLAY

**Brooklyn Ice House**318 Van Brunt St.,  
718-222-1865

Low on multimedia gimmicks and high on authenticity, this friendly speakeasy features some 70 European and local craft beers — plus Oktoberfest brews in season. It also claims to have the best pulled-pork sandwich in Brooklyn.

**Sunny's**253 Conover St.,  
718-625-8211

This Red Hook mainstay has been around since 1890 and is still run by the original family. Once a long-shoremen lunch counter, it is now a gathering place for the area's creative types and working class. It's hard to find, and even harder to find open — visit 8 p.m.-4 a.m. Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

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