

Astoria, conveniently located twenty minutes from the Eastside of Manhattan, is both an established community and a continuously evolving patchwork of neighborhoods. Astoria was a separate village until 1870, when it became part of Long Island City, incorporated into New York City 28 years later. It is a great place to look for a house because there is a lot of variety: single-family homes; two-family houses and multi-family investment properties.

Location Location Location. The N and W trains run straight up 31<sup>st</sup> Street from Queensboro Plaza to the last stop at Ditmars Boulevard. The R, V and G lines travel from Queens Plaza to Steinway and Broadway then to 46<sup>th</sup> Street. Bounded by 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 49<sup>th</sup> Street, the East River and Bowery Bay, Astoria is quite fortunate to have both a subway and an elevated train

Whether thinking of buying a house or renting an apartment, Astoria is worth consideration. The rents are much more affordable than Manhattan. The quick commute to Manhattan is one of the biggest contributing factors for the growth but certainly not the only one. The neighborhood is an epicurean delight. It is marvelous to shop in Astoria. There are bakeries, butcher shops, fish markets, vegetable stands, organic grocers and many shops that specialize in ethnic foods.

There are more cafes and restaurants than I can list. Hundreds of businesses enjoy a strong customer base in Astoria. Broadway, Steinway Street, 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Ditmars Boulevard are the time honored shopping routes but certainly newer ones can be found as well.

For those who use their cars Astoria offers two bridges to Manhattan (the 59<sup>th</sup> Street and the Robert F. Kennedy), the Brooklyn/Queens Expressway and the Grand Central Parkway. LaGuardia airport is a ten-minute drive by car or taxi but the M60 Bus leaves from Astoria every ten minutes.

Astoria is family-oriented and many like the diversity it has to offer. New construction and a number of charter schools were added to the community over the last ten years. Neighborhood public schools score higher than city averages on standardized tests. Astoria also has Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Islamic schools.

Different faiths are represented here. Both older and newer Houses of Worship are found all over Astoria. It is a community made up of many immigrants who enjoy their own religious practices and beliefs.

The recently completed Frank Sinatra High School of the Performing Arts, the Kaufman-Astoria studios and the recently expanded Museum of the Moving Image have breathed new life onto 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Steinway to 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. The Cineplex on 38<sup>th</sup> Street brought plenty of affordable restaurants to that same neighborhood. The best places are the ones you find by accident: kitschy art shops; trendy bars; second-hand stores, one-of-a kind boutiques, out of the way bistros.

What sustains Astoria is the mix of creative energy and the flow of new immigrants. The Steinway Piano factory and the J. D'Addario Company a musical string maker are just two that are known for setting a high standard in the industry.

Astoria Studios, established in 1920, made a quarter of all films produced in the country from 1921 to 1927. Stars like Rudolph Valentino and the Marx Brothers were among those filmed there. Astoria attracts film and television crews not only because of Kaufman and Silvercup studios but also because of the amount of waterfront. Many house-hunters and apartment-seekers work in the film or television production field.

Astoria Park is the largest of the parks along the East River. The park has a children's playground, an Olympic-size swimming pool, public tennis courts and an exercise track. There is a summer concert series. People of all ages spend time outdoors while enjoying a spectacular view of the New York City skyline.

Astoria is also a draw for tourists. The American Museum of the Moving Image, the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, Socrates Sculpture Park, and New York's only outdoor Beer Garden Bohemian Hall are a few of the well-known destinations.

The best way to explore Astoria is to wander around in different sections. Stop at a café. Shop for your favorite olives, cheeses or desserts. Sit and observe the locals or drop in at the Public Library. Get to know some variety "try it, you'll like it."