



FIND IT:

Rego Park is bordered on the north by the Long Island Expressway and on the south by the jagged boundary of a tip of Metropolitan Avenue, up to Alderton Street and across to 67th Avenue. It spans east to west from 102nd Street to Woodhaven Boulevard.



Ben's Best Kosher Delicatessen is known for its pastrami and corned beef.

LINDA ROSIER

guably the best shopping in Queens.

The Rego Center I and II shopping complexes feature stores like Costco, Century 21, Bed, Bath and Beyond, Aldi Supermarket and Burlington Coat Factory.

Small businesses, many family-run, also dot its main streets, like Metropolis Bicycles on Queens Boulevard and Creative Florist and Mark's Dry Cleaner on 63rd Drive.

The eateries reflect its blend of cultures, with Peruvian cuisine at Pio Pio on Woodhaven Boulevard, old-fashioned diner food at Shalimar Diner on Austin Street, Uzbek food at Cheburechnaya on 63rd Drive and seafood dishes at Black Sea Fish & Grill on Queens Boulevard.

For Yvonne Shortt, executive director of the Rego Park Green Alliance, it was the area's laid-back, family-friendly vibe that attracted her 10 years ago.

"I wanted a neighborhood where people lived in the community much longer," the mother of two said. "I wanted a place where people knew each other and really have conversations. And that's something we got here."

Beadle said the perception of Rego Park as being a little too sleepy is changing as young families and professionals move in.

"People found our secret. They're realizing they don't have to go far away from Manhattan to start a life and have it be affordable," he said. "[Rego Park is] in the middle of it all and it's a neighborhood with long-term roots and families."

TO EAT

Barosa, 62-29 Woodhaven Blvd. This Italian restaurant and brick-oven pizzeria offers upscale dining with a warm ambience. 718-424-1455

Ben's Best Kosher Delicatessen, 96-40 Queens Blvd. Indulge in pastrami and knishes, stuffed cabbage, matzo ball soup and sandwiches named after local businesses and politicians. 718-897-1700

Cheburechnaya, 92-09 63rd Drive. Dine on authentic Russian and Uzbek dishes like Chebureki with veal, mushroom, pumpkin or cabbage. 718-897-9080

TO PARTY

Bridie's Bar and Grill, 62-28 Woodhaven Blvd. Daily food and drink specials are on rotation while 18 flat-screen TVs show sports games. 718-426-8580

Tropix Bar and Lounge, 95-32 Queens Blvd. Tropix offers a chic setting in which to gather and party, with two private lounges and rotating DJs. 718-275-0024

Miller's Ale House Restaurant, 61-35 Junction Blvd. Dine on burgers, seafood, wings and steak and wash it down with a variety of beers on tap. 718-760-1090

TO SHOP

Rego Park Center I, 96-05 Queens Blvd. With Sears, Old Navy, Bed, Bath & Beyond and Burlington Coat factory, Rego Park families can find what they need here. Regoparkcenter.com

Rego Park Center II, 61-35 Junction Blvd. Stores like Century 21, Costco

Wholesale, Pier 1 Imports, Ulta Beauty and Toys "R" Us bring in scores of shoppers every day. Regoparkcenter.com

Trader Joe's, 90-30 Metropolitan Ave. Find fresh and healthy produce, grocery and frozen products, as well as wine and beer. 718-275-1791

TO DO

Lost Battalion Hall Recreational Center, 93-29 Queens Blvd. This center offers an outlet for local children and adults through arts and crafts activities, a computer room, an indoor basketball court and teen cardio and dance classes. 718-263-1163

Hot Yoga 4 You Rego Park, 65-07 Woodhaven Blvd. Calling themselves the original hot yoga establishment in Queens, this spot specializes in poses performed in 100-105-degree rooms, with classes led by knowledgeable and friendly instructors. Bikramyogarego.com

Havana Dreams Cigar Lounge, 63-10 Woodhaven Blvd. Cigar aficionados come here to

indulge in premium cigars that can be smoked indoors. Havanadreams.net

THE BUZZ

Residents in Rego Park want to see major improvements to Queens Boulevard, one of its bustling corridors. In May, Community Board 6 voted unanimously on a resolution that called for a complete redesign, aiming to improve pedestrian safety while making the boulevard more attractive.

"This will be good for the neighborhood, we're excited about it," said Peter Beadle, a member of the transportation committee on Community Board 6. "It would make Rego Park more spectacular, more livable."

The community board said it received more than 3,300 signatures and 200 letters from businesses, schools, senior centers and community and faith-based organizations along Queens Boulevard asking for Queens Boulevard to be studied by the city's Department of Transportation.

Known as "the boulevard of death," Queens Bou-

Q&A with JAY PARKER

Owner of Ben's Best Kosher Delicatessen

Jay Parker didn't think he'd be in the family business, but 35 years ago he took over this well-known kosher deli, located at 96-40 Queens Blvd., from his father. The staff at Ben's Best takes pride in their handmade pastrami and corned beef, and in their reputation as a local go-to spot for dining in, taking out and catering.



LISA FRASER

What's kept your business going for so long?

It's a very simple principle: My grandfather told me that during the Great Depression, the best doctors, lawyers and stockbrokers still made money, so if you want to have an insurance policy about continuing your success, just be the best. That's what we've always believed in. We've always tried to be the best at whatever products and service we give. We don't look at people as customers, but friends.

What's special about Rego Park?

It's always been a great neighborhood. It's not inexpensive but it's not Manhattan prices either. If you want to bring up a family and are moving out of Manhattan, this is one of the places I would look

at. I see younger families moving in now and there's nobody on the street that I don't know. I don't think you can get any better than this.

How do you serve the community?

Rego Park has gotten younger and is more of a melting pot now but that hasn't really affected the business. We cater for weddings, bat mitzvahs, shiva and Rosh Hashanah. People depend on us. We give discounts at Rosh Hashanah because when you need it most we'll sell it to you for the least. We give back to the community by donating to schools. And I'm involved in the Rego Park Jewish Center. We're more than a business; we're part of the fabric here.

levard is one of New York City's most dangerous streets for pedestrians. According to the city's Open Data website, since July 2012 there have been at least 244 pedestrian injuries and seven pedestrian deaths on Queens Boulevard. Six of those deaths

were in 2013 alone.

Some of the improvements that the community board wants to see along Queens Boulevard include an increase in pedestrian space, more green space and designated bus lanes.

A DOT spokesperson said that safety on Queens Boulevard is a priority for the agency and that it is currently looking at ways to potentially boost safety along the corridor, noting that pedestrian countdown clocks were added in 2011. The department expanded the medians and curbs on Queens Boulevard at Yellowstone Blvd, 71st Avenue, 67th Avenue and 62nd Drive this year.

The agency said it will continue "to engage elected officials, community boards and other local stakeholders in the coming months."

Take a load off and have a smoke at Havana Dreams Cigar Lounge on Woodhaven Boulevard.



LINDA ROSIER