

# In New York, downtown ups the ante

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Midtown and Uptown may claim some of the city's most famous landmarks. But the neighborhoods south of 14th Street give New York its spirit. Lower Manhattan beats with the steely spirit and creative exuberance that make this city great. Visiting the Lower East Side, SoHo, the East and West Village, Tribeca, Chinatown and the Meatpacking District is all about getting lost in the city's throbbing energy.

## STEP OUT

- ▶ Sure, everyone wants in on the rarified glamour of Andre Balazs' Top of the Standard at The Standard Hotel. But the real party is 18 floors down. At the **Standard Biergarten**, indulge in big-as-your-head beer steins, brats and soft pretzels with a rowdy mix of buttoned-up bankers, *Vogue* interns, models and the rockers who love them. 212-645-4646; [standardhotels.com/new-york-city/bars/biergarten](http://standardhotels.com/new-york-city/bars/biergarten)
- ▶ What's a rocker to do when his tastes mature from bottles of High Life to the actual high life? Open a winery, of course — like band booker Michael Dorf (of Knitting Factory fame). In his rustic-industrial **City Winery**, you can try the "Sohovignon Blanc," made on the premises, or the "New York City Cab-ernet Sauvignon," which comes on tap. There are performances by Dorf's music pals, from Patti Smith to Martha Wainwright. 212-608-0555; [citywinery.com](http://citywinery.com)
- ▶ Tucked between the fishmongers and dim sum joints, noodle bars and discount stores of Chinatown are some of the city's hippest watering holes. Take the **Mulberry Project**. This little rock-and-roll cocktail den — all industrial lights and graffiti walls — creates drinks on the fly. Just select a liquor and some fresh fruits and let the bartenders work their magic. 646-448-4536; [mulberryproject.com](http://mulberryproject.com)
- ▶ Manhattan still thrums with the sounds of every music genre, from subway platforms to stadiums. A favorite place to catch local acts? **Rockwood Music Hall**. This sliver of a club rarely charges a cover for the bluegrass bands, singer-songwriters, acoustic indie outfits and chanteuses that grace its tiny stage. Concerts feel like an intimate affair in someone's living room. 212-477-4155; [rockwoodmusichall.com](http://rockwoodmusichall.com)

