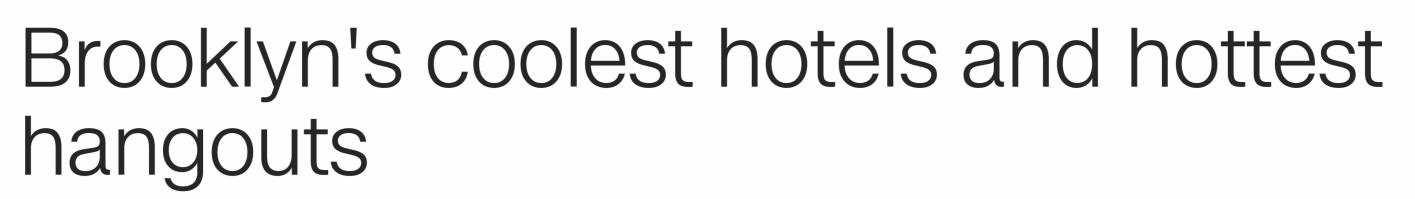


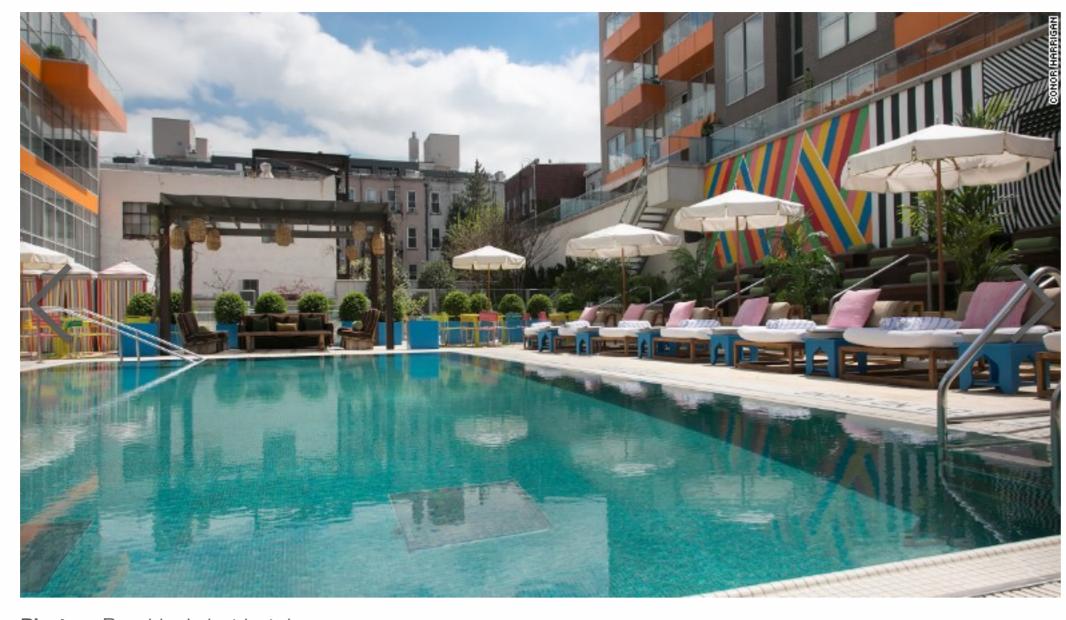
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By Jamie Beckman, CNN

CNN

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#### **Photos:** Brooklyn's hot hotels

Brooklyn's trendy hotel scene attracts visitors from around the world. The McCarren Hotel & Pool boasts one of New York City's largest heated outdoor swimming pools.

# 1 of 12

### Story highlights

One Brooklyn hotel is featured on this season of "The Bachelor"

1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge opened in February with a sage blessing ceremony

While they still exist at the Mast Brothers chocolate factory at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, what's currently popping up alongside this New York borough's artisanal

(CNN) — Never mind the image of the stereotypical

hipster with a waxed handlebar mustache riding a

vintage fixed-gear bicycle in Brooklyn.

cocktail lounges and trendy restaurants is a new generation of hotels.

Catering to travelers from overseas, around the United States or just over the river in Manhattan, these high-design enclaves put guests right in the middle of the laid-back, artsy Brooklyn vibe.

In fact, Brooklyn has become so entrenched in mainstream culture that producers for "The Bachelor" booked Monday's rose ceremony atop the luxe William Vale hotel in the neighborhood of Williamsburg.

It's a far cry from the area's manufacturing history, but the past is still front and center via original buildings; reclaimed wood, bricks and other material; and subtle design touches that evoke the borough's centuries-old trade and manufacturing industry.

Here are six of our favorite brand-new hotels and a couple of members of the old guard doing new things. All six serve upscale craft cocktails on property and feature city views that are better than any postcard.

# **McCarren Hotel & Pool**

The original gangster of the nouveau Brooklyn hotel scene, the relatively petite 5-year-old McCarren Hotel & Pool has changed with the times and begun adulting with the rest of the neighborhood.

The 64-room hotel recently introduced a Babies Who Brunch menu on Sundays, replete with a playroom, foam mats and Disney or Pixar movies for the kids and unlimited drinks for the adults.

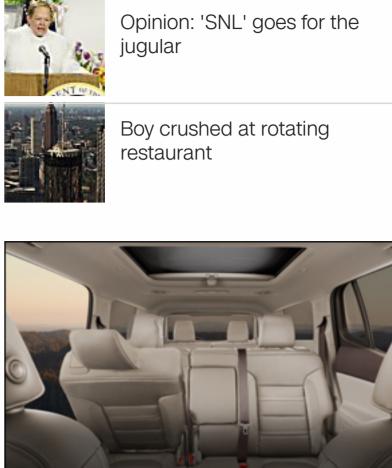
The upscale but spare midcentury design in the lobby trickles up to the rooms, all outfitted with Eames-style shell rocking chairs, furry throw pillows and Frette linens on the beds. (Coffee-loving travelers dig the Nespresso machines in every suite.) The hotel's scene-y see-and-be-seen outdoor pool, framed by a bold, splashy mural by street artist LovebErto, is practically made for Instagram.

DO: With or without the kids, hit the pool from 7 to 11 am, before it opens to the public. A midday tour of the Brooklyn Brewery is only a block away. In the summertime, the hotel rents out bicycles to guests, along with maps of biking routes in the area.

Late in the evening, the party starts bumping on the McCarren Hotel's roof deck, where local DJs spin in genres from Brazilian music to dubstep as partygoers lounge on plush black-andwhite-striped pillows and dance under a giant disco ball.

EAT: The hotel's restaurant, Oleanders, has a playful retro "fern room" aesthetic — evidenced by artist Yago Partal's portraits of zoo animals wearing headphones and hoodies — and focuses heavily on American comfort food. Specialties include the Southwest burger made with jalapeños and Woodford Reserve barbecue sauce, smoked gouda mac and cheese, and fried Brussels sprouts.







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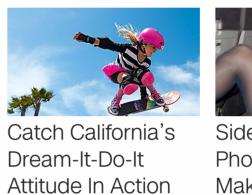
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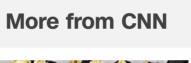
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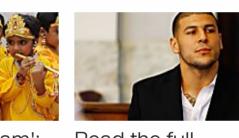
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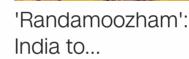


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Every morning, there's a complimentary breakfast for guests in the lobby. Outside the hotel, walk a few blocks north to Greenpoint and brunch either indoors or alfresco at neighborhood bistro Five Leaves, which emphasizes local ingredients and sustainable house-cured arctic char and steamed mussels with saffron-coconut sauce.

McCarren Hotel & Pool, mccarrenhotel.com, 160 N. 12th Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York, 718-218-7500, rooms from \$350.

# **Hilton Brooklyn**

The Hilton Brooklyn, which opened this past November in rapidly gentrifying Boerum Hill, takes its building's 1800s rope factory heritage very seriously: The carpeting in the hallways features a giant rope motif, the rooms' custom-made charcoal-sketch toile wallpaper depicts shipbuilding scenes, and the print of the navy-blue-and-white carpet in the rooms subtly recalls interlocking ropes. Vintage maps of Brooklyn dot the hallways and are incorporated into metalwork in the lobby of the 196-room "boutique-style" hotel.

Corporate travelers who are used to Hilton's usual perks will be happy to see there's an executive lounge and opportunities to earn rewards points, plus nice touches like Peter Thomas Roth toiletries and bowls of free fruit in the lobby.

(Other budget-friendly hotel options close by include the wellness-focused EVEN Hotel, from \$199, which has workout equipment in each room and houses the basketball teams that play against the Brooklyn Nets, and the Holiday Inn, also from \$199, whose French Korean restaurant, Brasserie Séoul, with its metal café chairs and Edison light bulbs, looks as though it was lifted right out of Williamsburg.)

EAT: Highly regarded Brooklyn chef Rob Newton heads up Black Walnut, the hotel's Southern Asian fusion restaurant, with a lineup featuring blistered shishito peppers, house-cultured whipped maple butter with warm Italian bread and classics like steak frites. Also on the menu: red wine from local winery Brooklyn Oenology. If you venture outside the hotel for dinner, the classic old-school Italian restaurant Queen, in Brooklyn Heights, has been ladling out red sauce for 50-plus years.

DO: Catch a Brooklyn Nets or New York Islanders game or listen to performers like Future and Barbra Streisand at the Barclays Center, which is blissfully within walking distance (aka no fighting for a cab or Uber afterward). Even closer is the performing arts venue Brooklyn Academy of Music, for progressive theater performances, movie screenings and film series.

Hilton Brooklyn, brooklynnewyork.hilton.com, 140 Schermerhorn Street, Boerum Hill, Brooklyn, New York, 718-834-8800, rooms from \$126.

# **The Williamsburg Hotel**

A towering Jenga-like structure built with reclaimed bricks, the Williamsburg Hotel is in the middle of a rolling opening, but two of five floors of rooms are available to book right now. Delightfully noticeable is the hotel's signature scent (think expensive fresh laundry), designed by Brooklyn-based company Apotheke, which also makes the hotel's toiletries.

The rooms strike a delicate balance between opulent and homey, with gold fixtures in the bathrooms, quilted leather headboards, gilded dark-wood wardrobes, velvet couches and bright knit blankets at the foot of the beds. Eventually, egg-shaped chairs will hang from the rooms' balconies, ideal for taking in Manhattan views, or the perfect selfie. The hotel rolls out the red carpet for pets, providing each fluffball with a cushioned bed, a chew toy shaped like a trophy and stainless-steel food and water dishes.

**DO:** Soon the rooftop will be home to a pool and a tiny 20-person cocktail bar inside a water tower, currently under construction. For now, browse the afternoon away at nearby Artists & Fleas market, where local vendors sell their wares, including jewelry, vintage clothing and art prints, and Rough Trade indie record store, which hosts live acts such as Ryan Adams and Karen Elson.

**EAT:** The hotel's veggie-focused restaurant, Harvey, is slated to open this spring, but until then, chef Adam Leonti, who hand-mills his own flours, is whipping up bite-sized sweet and savory pastries for the hotel bar's afternoon high tea, which elevates routine to art form.

The selection of teas is curated by tea expert and Brooklynite Stefen Ramirez, so you can pair a blood orange linzer cookie with a Korean wild pear herbal tea, all while hanging out among young locals using the ample, cavernous space (and the free Wi-Fi) as their personal workspace. For dinner, down the street, family-run Italian restaurant Gran Sasso hand-makes pastas like Parmesan tortelli with squash, sage and crispy prosciutto.

The Williamsburg Hotel, thewilliamsburghotel.com, 96 Wythe Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York, 718-362-8100, rooms from \$250

#### The William Vale

Positioning itself as a brand-spanking new, resort-inspired hotel rather than an homage to Williamsburg's past, the monstrous 22-story, 183-room William Vale has eschewed design hallmarks like reclaimed wood and old-timey signage that scream "Brooklyn!" Instead, guests get art installations in the lobby and in the elevators, ultra-modern furniture and sweeping views of both Manhattan and Brooklyn through towering panes of glass. Oh, and "The Bachelor." Every room has a balcony.

Up top, the hotel's sprawling nightclubby cocktail bar, Westlight, hosts both locals and guests looking to take in the views and try original cocktails with names like the College Fund, made with three kinds of rum, tiki bitters, cream and root beer. Fun fact: The hotel is also home to retail space.

One newly announced tenant is Dylan Sprouse -- yes, of "The Suite Life with Zack & Cody" fame, who is now a master brewer. His mead-focused brewery, All-Wise Meadery, will churn out pints and bottles this summer.

**DO:** Weather permitting, swim in the hotel's 60-foot-long outdoor pool, or check out the hotel's original programming. It aims to bring hotel guests and the local community together for lectures, live performances and wellness classes, including a monthly meditation event centered around the full moon and an upcoming live, interactive prank-calling show called "Prank You."

EAT: Leuca, the hotel's Southern Italian restaurant run by chef Andrew Carmellini, with its signature squid ink spaghetti, has been on local restaurant geeks' hot list ever since it opened in November. Sharing the Sophia Loren affogato sundae for two is an event all by itself.

When the weather is warmer, the hotel's Mister Dips airstream food truck parks on the hotel's public green space and sells burgers, fries and ice cream. Off property, having brunch at the Southern comfort food restaurant Brooklyn Star is practically a rite of passage for locals, especially when you order the fried chicken and waffles with apple butter and fresh grapefruit.

The William Vale, thewilliamvale.com, 111 N. 12th Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York, 718-631-8400, rooms from \$350

# Wythe Hotel

Retrofitted into a former cooperage that was built in 1901, the Wythe Hotel has been doing its vintage-meets-modern thing since 2012. It still retains the building's original pine beams and factory windows but infuses the space with of-the-moment accoutrements, including framed modern art in the lobby and eco-friendly toiletries by local purveyor Goldie's. The hotel's 70 rooms carry the same industrial but homey vibe, with radiant-heat concrete flooring, beds made from reclaimed ceiling timbers, and picture-perfect views of Manhattan in premium rooms.

Adding to the cool-kid factor is the hotel's latest project, a live-streaming pop-up radio lounge in the lobby featuring performances and discussions with authors, activists, fashion designers, musicians and other creative types. When it's not a recording studio, the lobby functions as a sitting room-cum-library or a retail shop, depending on programming.

**DO:** Right across the street from the Wythe is Brooklyn Bowl, a large, high-tech bowling alley that doubles as an event space for live music — among other musical acts, DJ Questlove has a Thursday night residency.

**EAT:** A destination in itself, the hotel's restaurant, Reynard, from Brooklyn restaurateur Andrew Tarlow, is a local favorite with an ever-changing seasonal menu, but they Reynard burger, made with gruyere and and caramelized onions, is a classic.

Upstairs, The Ides Bar serves classic cocktails and small plates like lobster sliders, paired with views of Manhattan from both inside the bar and out on the roof deck. Want a classic Brooklyn pie? You can't go wrong with Paulie Gee's a few blocks north in Greenpoint, which tops pizzas with anything-but-the-usual ingredients like sake reductions and hot honey.

Wythe Hotel, wythehotel.com, 80 Wythe Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York, 718-460-8000, rooms from \$300

# **1** Hotel Brooklyn Bridge

A sage blessing ceremony kicked off the opening of the five-star 1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge in mid-February as the first guests checked in to the massive warehouse-like space in Dumbo, right by the Brooklyn Bridge.

The 10-story nature-focused hotel has plenty of nods to the location's manufacturing heritage, the sea, and the bridge itself everywhere on the property. It includes the slim metal rods of the entrance's grand staircase, intended as an ode to the bridge; an art installation in the lobby featuring 6,000 pounds of rope-bound obsidian rocks; and the elevator, whose rough wooden planks are meant to evoke a shipping container.

In keeping with the 1 Hotels brand's eco-friendly mission, more than half of the materials used in the hotel's design are local or reclaimed, including pine beams from the former Domino Sugar factory in Williamsburg. Standing beside the windows inside one of the 194 rooms — all outfitted in neutral tones, wood, rope, leather, marble and live greenery — the Brooklyn Bridge looks close enough to touch.

**DO:** Walking across the Brooklyn Bridge to Manhattan is a free and convenient must-do. When the weather heats up, One°15 Brooklyn Marina offers sailing classes and kayaking. Also nearby is famous Gleason's Gym, known as the boxing gym where Muhammad Ali trained for his fight with Sonny Liston, which often hosts boxing shows and clinics.

Closer to home, the hotel's plunge pool occupies a corner of the rooftop, along with fire pits and seating made from reclaimed railroad wood, an ideal place to admire downtown Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty on nearby Liberty Island. The hotel's holistic Bamford Haybarn Spa will open this fall.

**EAT:** The hotel is still working on partnering with restaurants to open within the space. Until then, Neighbors, the café next to the lobby, sells locally made grab-and-go (or stay) drinks and bites, such as cookies from Crown Heights baker Butter & Scotch and single-origin Dominican chocolate from Cacao Prieto in Red Hook. For a glass of wine and a bowl of pasta, rustic Sardinian restaurant River Deli is a promenade stroll away.

1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge, 1hotels.com, 60 Furman Street, Dumbo, Brooklyn, New York, rooms from \$350

Brooklyn-based freelancer Jamie Beckman has written about travel for Budget Travel, The Boston Globe Magazine and USA Today.

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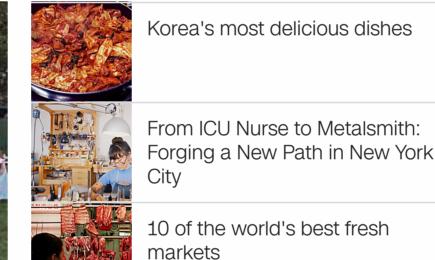
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