

► Beat the crowds with posh July Fourth parties ► Cruise the Hudson or hang out on a rooftop ► Hotels, restaurants offer Independence Day deals

Get in on the fireworks frenzy

Take it easy

If a bag of pretzels and a cozy bench is more your style, try grabbing a spot early at De Witt Clinton Park. The prime viewing spot also features playground equipment and sports fields — plenty to keep the kiddos busy before the show starts.

De Witt Clinton Park
West 52nd Street and 11th Avenue; free public access

The 2012 Macy's Fourth of July fireworks are just around the corner. The 36th annual summertime staple will include 40,000 fireworks set off from six barges in the Hudson River between 18th and 43rd Streets, beginning at 9 p.m.

This pyrotechnic spectacular is not to be missed, though the coveted hot spots for watching along the West Side Highway fill up quickly with crowds. Metro has you covered for some of the city's other best views of the fireworks, for both big spenders and the budget-conscious.

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Go cruising

Get up close and personal with the fireworks on a river cruise. Step aboard one of Classic Harbor Line's impressive yachts and enjoy cocktails and hors d'oeuvres as you watch the show in style. It's a pricey endeavor, but the cruises last nearly three hours and offer incredible views from below the show.

Classic Harbor Line
Chelsea Piers,
212-627-1825,
\$275 to \$425 per person

Make a night of it

Luxury hotel Gansevoort Meatpacking NYC is featuring an Independence Day package that includes a sky-high view of the fireworks show from Plunge Rooftop Bar & Lounge. A special nightly offer includes meals, spa treatments and other goodies for those looking for a perfect "staycation."

Get Lit in the City
Gansevoort Meatpacking
NYC, 18 Ninth Ave.
212-206-6700,
from \$536 per night

Party on the roof

Let freedom ring at Ink48 hotel's Fourth of July Party at the stunning rooftop The Press Lounge. Gather your friends and head to this four-hour all-American event that includes food, desserts and the most important thing — an open bar. Grab a room with a view of the Hudson if the party goes late.

Fourth of July Party at The Press Lounge
Ink48, 653 11th Ave.
212-757-0088,
\$325 per person

Drink downtown

You don't need an unlimited budget to enjoy the fireworks at a posh rooftop lounge. Check out the wallet-friendly view from PH-D at Dream Downtown hotel, instead. There's no entrance fee, and cocktail and food specials all night (think: lobster boil) make this one patriotic party!

PH-D at Dream Downtown
355 West 16th St.
212-229-2559,
no entrance fee

Party on the pier

Beat the crowds along the West Side Highway and party on the pier with Circle Line Sightseeing's annual July Fourth shindig. Tickets get you access to an unobstructed view of the fireworks right along the Hudson River. There will be cold beer and grilled American favorites available for sale.

Circle Line Pier Party
Pier 83, West 42 Street and 12th Avenue
212-563-3200,
\$89 per person