



04

New York

An exclusively Club Class flight to New York? It's not big or clever. Actually, it really is.

UNLESS YOU'RE FLYING BY PRIVATE JET, First Class or attached to helium balloons, there's no better way to reach New York than in BA001: the new British Airways Club World only flight from London City to JFK. It stops briefly in Shannon, Ireland, to refuel and clear US immigration then sneaks in as a domestic arrival at JFK, thereby skipping Manhattan-length queues. It's the flight with 32 flat bed seats – and room for 100 seats – a fantastically attentive cabin crew, decent meals and OnAir, the pioneering in-flight communication system for keeping in touch with Earthlings.

Touch down at JFK and you swish out to the Big Apple in seconds. There, Manhattan squillionaires get picked up by Farrell limos in their distinctive Royal Blue cars with paler blue roof (for easy identification in the melee outside grand social events, darling) and their besuited, always-early drivers and vans for the Louis Vuitton. Or choose the fave car company of in-the-know Lady Cosima Somerset of Concierge London and NY fame: the family-run E-Z Ryder Limousine Service – and go for blacked-out windows and the celebrity car of choice.

First stop has to be The Mark, fresh from its \$150 million makeover. Since the hotel's opening last year, it has become the uber chic Upper East Side meeting place for social X-rays, Bergdorf Blondes and slebs. It has Turnbull & Asser clad staff and an upbeat modernist Jacques Grange interior and classical suites. (Grange's private clients have included Yves Saint Laurent and Princess Caroline). Think traditional architecture fused with a groovy interior and one-off contemporary pieces by the likes of Ron Arad and Guy de Rougemont. Plus faultless service, the god of general managers James

THE DETAILS

British Airways
BA001 twice daily from
London City Airport.
britishairways.com

(ex Carlyle and Savoy) Sherwin, and restaurant regulars like Woody Allen and Barbara Walters.

If you must step out, you can sample the new New York: everything that's recent and vogueish. There's Andre Balazs' sky-high Boom Boom Room for spectacular views, by-invitation-only drinks and shoulder-rubbing with Madonna in the Meatpacking District. (Think waitresses in skimpy backless dresses, an adjacent black-tiled room with a soaking tub, and vertiginous glass-floored smoking terraces). For top nosh, try the Monkey Bar with its Edward Sorrel murals, Old Money and Girl Power financial diners, and superlative lobster pie. (Owned by Vanity Fair editor Graydon Carter, reservations are only by email unless you're a FOG – friend of Graydon's).



If it's clothes you need, then hot foot it to Bellhaus, the new lifestyle store in Soho. (Think American designers and well-selected pieces from Azzedine Alaïa to Tom Binns). Get an art fix in the New Museum of Contemporary Art's mesh-clad building of stacked off-centre boxes. Then have a drink at the Crosby Street Hotel (see BRITH page 38 for review), on Sundays, you can sink into a tangerine leather cinema seat to watch a Film Club movie in its screening room.

Exhausted yet? So check into Robert de Niro's Greenwich hotel for its Shibui Spa. It's in a beautifully reconstructed 250-year-old Japanese bamboo farmhouse. Ahhhh. Then hop back onto BA001. Concorde may have reached the end of the great runway in the sky, but its number and spirit lives ON. CAROLINE PHILLIPS