

## The 5 Best Hot Dogs in New York City

Think New York hot dogs are all “dirty water dogs?” Guess again



Katz's Deli serves the perfect New York hot dog.

Arthur Bovino

As opposed to, say, **Chicago** <sup>[1]</sup>, New York doesn't exactly have a reputation for having amazing hot dogs. Sure, its sidewalk hot dog carts are legendary, but sitting in tepid water for hours does not a great hot dog make. Thankfully, there are some truly amazing hot dogs to be had in New York if you know where to look, and five of them made it into our recent ranking of the **75 Best Hot Dogs in America** <sup>[2]</sup>, which started with a survey of more than 200 hot dog shops from around the country and was voted on by a panel of experts. Here they are:

### **#5 Nathan's Famous, Coney Island**

The most famous hot dog stand in the country, and still one of the best. Founded by Polish immigrant Nathan Handwerker in 1916, **Nathan's** <sup>[3]</sup> didn't just rely on a quality product (the hot dog recipe was his wife Ida's); its founder was also a shrewd businessman. He sold his franks for just 5 cents, making them the cheapest around, and reportedly hired actors to dress as doctors

and eat there in order to convince folks that they were safe to eat. The business took off, and today there are more than 40,000 outlets selling Nathan's hot dogs.

#### **#4 Gray's Papaya, New York City**

The classic New York hot dog comes in many forms, but they're almost always made by one company: Sabrett. **Gray's Papaya** <sup>[4]</sup> is now down to just one New York location, on the Upper West Side, and this colorful purveyor of old-school New York character grills their natural-casing Sabrett dogs on a flat top, nestles them inside a lightly toasted bun, and tops them with mustard, sauerkraut, or the classic "onions in sauce," also made by Sabrett. Lean up against the ledge, wash down a couple with some papaya drink, and be on your merry way, full, content, and out only a few bucks. [related]

#### **#3 Bark Hot Dogs, Brooklyn**

While some hot dog sellers are secretive about the origins of their product, the folks behind **Bark** <sup>[5]</sup>, located in Brooklyn's Park Slope neighborhood (with a second location recently opened in Greenwich Village), are more than happy to let you know where they source their hot dogs (and all the rest of their ingredients, right down to the cabbage used in the sauerkraut). Upstate New York's Hartmann's Old World Sausage worked with them to create a stellar dog, which gets a basting of lard butter as it's browning on the flat top before being placed into a grilled, buttered split-top bun from Pepperidge Farm. Toppings stay fairly traditional, but one of our guilty pleasures is their bacon Cheddar dog, which tops the dog with a sprinkling of diced Nueske's bacon, a house-made Cheddar sauce, and diced pickled onions. All condiments are made in-house, except for the ketchup, mustard, and mayo. "Some things are just American classics," they explain on their menu.

#### **#2 Crif Dogs, New York City**

Since opening on St. Marks Place in 2001, **Crif Dogs** <sup>[6]</sup> has been the standard-bearer for unique and exciting hot dogs in New York, and they now have a second location in Brooklyn. No offering sums up their "kitchen sink" approach to the hot dog better than the Good Morning, which transforms a hot dog into one of the great breakfast sandwiches: It starts with a bacon-wrapped, deep-fried hot dog (Crif's claim to fame), and adds a slice of melty American cheese and a fried egg. Other insane creations include the Garden State (wrapped in Taylor ham and sopped with chopped pepperoncini, American cheese, and mustard) and the Tsunami (bacon-wrapped and topped with teriyaki, pineapple, and green onions).

#### **#1 Katz's Deli, New York City**

**Katz's Deli** <sup>[7]</sup>, on New York's Lower East Side, is a New York institution. Their corned beef and pastrami, made on-premises and sliced to order, are legendary, and the simple act of taking your ticket, standing in line, bantering with the counterperson while placing your order, and finding a table has become as New York an exercise as, well, eating a hot dog with a smear of mustard and a little sauerkraut. And it just so happens that the hot dogs here are very good; the best in the country, in fact. Made especially for the restaurant by Sabrett, these garlicky, natural-casing, jumbo-size all-beef dogs spend such a long time on the flat-top grill that the outside gets a nice char and snaps when you bite into it. A smear of mustard is all that's needed, but a little sauerkraut or stewed onions certainly won't hurt. It's a perfect hot dog, from a perfect deli.

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