

“Anything Goes” In De-Lovely City of New York!

Allen snickered and said, “We’re country come to town,” as we arrived at LaGuardia Airport in New York City after just over a one hour flight to the Big Apple. Along with our sister and brother in law, the four of us hailed a cab and were hurried toward upper Manhattan, our digs for the next five days. Inside was, as I imagined, a one-bedroom apartment with two spacious rooms.

I stepped lively across the living room and peered out the double windows to spy a side street and a bit of Broadway in my peripheral view. In New York City nothing moves slowly or quietly, and cabs, cars and buses all seemed to be belting out a symphony of honking horns coupled together with sirens from fire and police units. We’re in the big city so don’t expect it to be peaceful and serene, I thought. It was, after all, New York, and we were De-Lighted to at last be among the locals, where absolutely “Anything Goes!”

Venturing out among the citizens of the neighborhood a multitude of languages emerged. Thick accents summoned their counterparts through the grocery aisles and out onto the sidewalks. In the corner market merchandise was stacked from floor to ceiling and into every possible nook and cranny. The “too narrow for two people” aisles were all filled with shoppers from what appeared to be every spot on the globe. And then I remembered the city’s history and how those people came for freedom and liberty, and there they were, in the grocery, on the streets, on the buses, subway and taxis, walking their dogs, working behind the counters of each delicatessen, coffee house, bookstore, gift shop, all living the American dream they and their ancestors before them came in search of.

That night we were officially welcomed to the city with a home-cooked meal and a fan-taz view. In friends’ apartment eight floors up you couldn’t hear all the street sounds and there was a more tranquil aura. We were schooled on which subway to catch and the best bus stops, and we all left feeling good about our expectations for the next day.

The following day, and before heading into SoHo for our marathon shopping spree, we lunched at Robert’s Restaurant, nestled atop the Museum of Art and Design, right in the center of Columbus Circle and overlooking infamous Central Park. It was pretty spectacular. Just the sights from Robert’s alone were worth the trip, and the food, too lovely to eat, was something we managed to De-Vour. After taking the subway to Greenwich Village I wondered how those in search of freedom and liberty “cottoned” to that sort of transportation day in and day out?

SoHo, the 26-block, 500 building Mecca of international fashion, was fun, friendly and frenzied. The countless trendy boutiques had much to offer, but you didn’t dare cross the street unless the “walk” sign was in full glow. Even then you crossed with trepidation. You’d best beware of a cab with a fare; otherwise you could end up in a wheel chair! Traffic was De-Lirious!

Afterwards, the subway ride back was just the same as the first. Standing with my feet apart for better leverage and with a firm grip ahold the railing, I counted the stops back to our apartment. We got home, and a nice little siesta would have been a welcomed treat, but our bed, a pullout couch, was in the living room where everyone was hanging out. No rest for the weary, they say, and so we began readying ourselves for a night on the town, New York City style.

With tickets to see the acclaimed Broadway sensation, “Anything Goes,” we entered the Stephen Sondheim Theatre to join a packed house. The musical, a remake of the 1930’s version starring Ethel Merman and her vivaciously strong voice, along with Cole Porter classics like “Anything Goes”, “It’s De-Lightful” and “Friendship,” was heralded to be just as great the second time around. We were thrilled by leading lady Sutton Foster in her award winning, best actress role, along with a now 77-year-old Joel Grey. All of us were enamored with Foster as Reno Sweeney and the charming, comical portrayal of Moonface Martin by Grey. The storyline was “De-lightful,” the tunes “De-licious” and the actors, “De-lovely.” It was a night to remember. A night on Broadway enjoying musical theater is a hard act to follow, as we would soon be reminded.

For the next day and a half, Allen was holed up in our New York City apartment with what we now think was the Norovirus. I opted to miss the sight-seeing tours because quite honestly, I’ve never seen my husband so sick. My in-laws continued on their predetermined path, and Allen and I watched shows on his iPad and iPhone while he remained in bed - unable to do much of anything else, De-Pitts!

As if my husband’s being sick weren’t bad enough, we received a call from Gable Gathings at home telling us that our Siberian Husky, Belle, had accidentally been set free and was

worrying in similar fashion for Belle. After what seemed an eternity of worry, my cell phone rang around lunchtime and a friendly voice, Jeff Harris, said, “Your dog just wandered into my shop.” And soon Belle was on her way back home and into our backyard via Mr. Harris. In case I failed to thank you, let me thank you now, Jeff. Because of you and others who were out searching for Belle, and whom I would also like to thank, I didn’t have to catch the next flight home. De-Lighted!!

Feeling assured that Allen was on the mend and knowing Belle was safe made the apartment, which offered no privacy, no television, no internet and no real bed, seem trivial. Watching Andy Griffith reruns on the four-inch iPhone was De-Ceiving. As bad as that may sound, we did come to enjoy it for several hours during the entire day and night Allen was sick...until we both became somewhat De-Lirious from watching the tiny screen. But remember, in New York, “Anything Goes,” and the wedding vows, “In sickness and in health,” can very well come into play, even if you ARE on vacation.

By afternoon the next day Allen was ready to venture out. We headed straight to Saint John’s Cathedral, which was basically across the street from our apartment, and the MET (Metropolitan Museum of Art), where we only managed to scratch the surface. The amazing works of art are astonishing, and much to our De-Light we were able to view many of the masters. We were most captivated by Rembrandt’s depiction of light. In-De-Scribe! Viewing his works, along with Monet, Van Gogh, DaVinci, just to name a few, was awe-inspiring, and exhibits from Greece, Africa, the Medieval Times, China and Japan completely proved to be De-Limit to what we could accomplish in one day at the MET.

Allen, still subdued from his traumatic 24-hour bug, couldn’t muster up the energy to go, as we had planned to the Blue Note Jazz Club later that evening. Instead we did as all the local New Yorkers do, called for Chinese De-Livery...and just as it seems on television, it was De-Lectable!

The next morning we attended a De-Luxe brunch with friends, and our final New York City De-Lemma would be whether or not to continue our trek through the MET museum or see High Line Park. Since the wind chill was pretty blustery we opted for a second visit to the MET and were again De-Lerious with its enormity. After two days we’ve still only begun to see what is housed there and can’t wait for a return.

Ours was not the typical New York adventure, but it is a city where “Anything Goes” for sure. It was a trip rich in culture, offering us a more keen sense of appreciation for a city where artistic expression, historical sights and beautiful architecture all collide in De-Luxe fashion. And though this was our final day we felt like the trip was complete, even with the “abbreviated exploration time due to illness” factored in.

During our cab ride to the airport we spoke with the driver, who almost instantly asked, “Are you from North Carolina?”

I couldn’t imagine how he could possibly know (grin). Perhaps our accents were clue enough. The driver, with a thick accent of his own, was from India and had lived in New York for thirteen years. He spoke of the hustle and bustle and many of the things we witnessed for ourselves. With two children, Maitra had been looking for a place with farmland where he could raise his kids away from the big city scene. Maitra had spent much time online. “I want to become a farmer and buy much land. It is too expensive in New York and there is not a lot of land to buy here. I am looking at farms in Cabarrus and Union Counties,” he said. That really got our attention! What a surprise and what a small world. Of course we told him of Anson County and how De-lightful, De-Licious and De-Lovely it is. He was intrigued. “But will they like me and my family,” he asked? And with reassurance from both Allen

and me that he would fit in just fine, he was convinced and ready to further his searches, to include Anson County for his purchase of farmland. When Allen handed him the names of all of our local realtors, along with the telephone numbers for each, it was as if he had been given a gold nugget. It wouldn’t be surprising to me if we meet Maitra on our De-Lovely streets one day in the not so distant future, especially after our glowing review of home sweet home, a De-Lightful place to live and where ALMOST “Anything Goes!”

By the way, if you’re wondering about the De-Cision to include such plays on words as De-Lightful, De-Licious, De-Lovely? They’re from my favorite tune, *It’s De-lovely*, from the play “Anything Goes.” And though I cannot take the credit, as you can tell, I was quite taken by the humor, wit and charm of its lyrics.

By Melanie Lyon



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