



The Apollo

What am I getting myself into?

It's Showtime at the Apollo! And you should be there to experience all the majesty and history of this American landmark—all the while treating yourself to any myriad of fabulous performances. Be it a comedy show, a dance performance, or a rock-and-roll concert, the Apollo has seen it all. It has been there for the birth of ragtime, the rise and fall of swing, the launch of classic and blues and Jazz artists like Ella Fitzgerald and B.B. King. So, let's take the advice of the First Lady of Song and the Queen of Jazz herself and take the A train to Harlem. But instead of stopping off at Sugar Hill, let's get off at 125 street in Harlem and walk a block into American Musical history.

How long does it take?

How much time you spend at the Apollo depends on how you want to experience it. If you want to view it as solely a historic landmark, you can schedule an hour-long tour. However, keep in mind that tours are only available for groups of twenty or more and must be scheduled in advance. If you are an individual or a smaller group, you can tag along to a larger group, but you will be doing so at the convenience of the venue, not the other way around.

But to be honest, this isn't the best way to experience the Apollo. It is a theater, not a museum. The best way to see it is during a performance. So, check the calendar and see who performing while you are in uptown. I assure you, whatever it is will be worth the price of admission.

What's the history and stats of this place? / How long has it been here?

There are literal volumes of books dedicated to the history of the Apollo and its impact on American culture. Far too much to go into detail here. But I'll give you some cliff notes as to not leave you hanging!

Opening its doors in 1914 as a burlesque theater, like most places in America at the time it was off-limits to black patrons. But as the culture of New York and the demographics of Harlem changed, so did the usage and intended audience of the theater. In 1933 the Apollo closed its doors to burlesque and reopened them in 1934 under new owners--right in the middle of the Harlem Renaissance. As the neighborhood exploded with literature, poetry, music and visual arts the Apollo was there to catch and feature it all.

1934 was also the beginning of its legendary amateur nights, during which aspiring performers were either lauded by the audience or booed and pulled off the stage. Legendary jazz singer Sarah Vaughan and hip-hop icon Lauryn Hill both began their careers during this historic talent show.

As the years passed, performing on the Apollo began to symbolize the epitomical success for Black performers. Any and everybody who has “made-it”, has performed on the Apollo stage. From Duke Ellington to Bob Marley, Aretha Franklin to Prince; all have made their mark on the iconic stage.

When’s the best time to go?

When you’d like to visit the Apollo is totally up to you. But Amateur Night every Wednesday at 7:30 is a classic choice if you want to experience the true spirit of Harlem. Other highlights at the theater include the annual Kwanzaa celebration “Regeneration Night” at the end of December and the “Africa Now!” celebration that occurs every year in early spring. Both of wonderful representations of the history and future of the Apollo and should be experienced at least once in a lifetime.

Check the calendar for specific dates.

Recommended for...

While children have been performing and experiencing the Apollo theater for generations, a first time visit here should be reserved for adults—preferably a group of friends. A concert, dance performance or comedy show at the Apollo is perfect for a girls’ night out, or a collective date night for group of married folks who are looking for a kid free night out on the town. Stop by one of the many bars nearby first or grab a drink inside the theater itself. Either way, you’ll have a fabulous NYC night!

How to get there?

You can get to the Apollo by subway by taking the A, B, C or D trains to 125th Street and walk one and a quarter blocks East to the Theater.

Or take the 2 or 3 trains to 125th Street and walk two blocks west. Lastly, you can take the 4,5 or 6 trains to 125th Street and then either take a taxi or a bus Westbound to 8th Avenue/Frederick Douglass Boulevard. Walk a quarter block East to the Apollo Theater.

If you are coming via the Metro North, take any scheduled Metro North train to the Harlem/125th Street stop. Once downstairs either take a taxi or a bus Westbound to 8th Avenue/Frederick Douglass Boulevard. Then walk a quarter block East to the Apollo Theater.

By Car: To get the most accurate directions possible, please use the online map [here](#).

Parking in NYC is never easy, but here are some lots and garages nearby:

Central Parking Garage

126th Street between Lenox Ave and Powell Blvd
(7th Ave)

Giselle Garage Corp

132nd Street between Lenox Ave & Powell Blvd (7th
Ave) Phone number: (212) 283-0058

Safe Haven Parking Inc

126th Street between Adam Clayton Jr. Powell Blvd
(7th Ave) & Douglass Blvd (8th Av)

MTP 129th Street Parking

129th Street between Broadway and 12th Avenue.
Phone number: (212) 280-7487

Adventure scale

To have a good time at the Apollo, all you need is a love for the arts and a reverence for American history.

Price scale

Tickets for most performances at the Apollo will range from \$22-\$34 dollars. All seats are good seats so don't worry too much where you sit--just enjoy the show.

Where to buy/sign up?

All ticket can be purchased online [here](#) or at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com). If you would like to order tickets by phone call Ticketmaster (800) 745-3000.

You can also purchase tickets in person at the Apollo Theater Box Office. And for groups of 10 or more call (212) 531-5355 to purchase tickets are schedule a tour.

See you at showtime!