



## **Bushwick camaraderie: Marches with its own flag**

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Commercial camaraderie makes Bushwick work - startups collaborate and draw business. Lincoln Center, The Meat Market, The Lower East Side all have a similarly themed pull. Bushwick's real estate exudes a certain gravity, a neo-expressionism which delivers an emotional experience, rather than a well-honed sense of arrival.

If you're looking for that soul re-set following one of those a rough work days where only a neighborhood bar can light your match, find your way to Bushwick (the L train to Morgan Ave. or Jefferson St.). You won't see many self-preening hipsters. Bushwick marches forward under a flag of its own.

For real estate, three Bushwick destinations exemplify this promise:

\* Anchor Inn: Sometimes finding a place to unwind is harder than a days' worth of work. Anchor Inn (at Scholes and Waterbury St.) exemplifies itself by complimenting its neighbor, Acheron. It's their music, drink and feeling: If one place isn't working for you the next place will. Anchor wears an interior so basic it could only have been made by a truly skilled craftsmen.

It speaks in that coveted evocative, imaginative language: bar + arrival + kitsch = the unpretentious connection of plutocrats enshrined in velvet art. Open until 4 a.m., its initial crowd lived legally as loft dwellers of the East Williamsburg Warehouse District. Now the neighborhood feels stuck, dwelling options dwindling as the FDNY closes them down one by one.

Real estate perspective: The owners took a functionally obsolete footprint in an aging warehouse district and attracted seasoned bar owners with the promise of little to no neighborhood objections.

The Anchor Inn feels like: Bang! You're in Bushwick!

\* The Narrows & Noodle King: That "where is this place?" feeling of private knowledge and familiarity holds large at The Narrows (Flushing Ave. and Vandervoort Place). Ringing with a speak-easy style, its well-priced, well-named food and beverage selection echoes its 20th Century off-limits feeling that you just braved the elements to seek your reward. The Narrows could easily open at One Fifth Ave., once Washington Sq.'s Art Deco primer. That's what makes this restaurant feel so very Bushwick.

Started three years ago by a couple of 20-year-old guys, the Narrows shows what low dough, high reach, and solid culinary skills can conspire to offer in Brooklyn. The Narrows runs the thin line of Brooklyn architecture that compliments cuisine, without playing the Williamsburg card. It's new with the right sense of connectivity, from its backyard, to bench seating, booths and very alluring bar. Its walls are painted with maps to invoke a pre-Cold War feel of risk-and-conquer. Where The Anchor Inn collaborated with its neighbor, the Narrow took a different approach to collaboration, opening the Noodle King next door. The owner says, "These two restaurants are the left and right sides of our brains." Noodle King is a former Dominican bar, the walls adorned with the previous owners' mirrors and sprayed in underwater themed St. Art. The kitchen expanded before Tiki glasses with kitsch

umbrellas were added. If Tiki bar culture emphasizes the feel of romanticized emerging Polynesian refinement, polish, and sophistication, then Noodle King and The Narrows define two world of Brooklyn on one block.

Real estate: Open until 4 a.m., Noodle King and The Narrows both talk to what owners are doing in Bushwick to create distinction. The highest and best use is surveying for entrepreneurial talent, enviably drawing distinction in any market cycle.

\* Montana's Roadhouse (Opens in June): Many places in Bushwick deserve mention: Bushwick St. Art, the incredible chocolate manufacturer Fresh and Raw, Roberta's, to name just a few. Once in a while something happens to change direction: It is Montana's Roadhouse (Troutman St. and Starr St.) With strains of an Appalachian hunting shack - wood planking festoons its exterior - the flow of its interior carries the Smoky Mountain theme further: Wallpaper of bats, John Wayne-styled men's room, sliding bookshelf opening to a mystery garden. Combining their visual ingredients with a modest menu of apple butter, homemade switchels, vinegars aged in Kings County whiskey barrels, and cocktail selections from bourbons, drinks called "curse throwers" and "panty droppers," this emergent restaurant group knows how to get noticed. Essentially two rooms and kitchen is all it takes to make the Roadhouse statement: "This place oozes with fresh."

Real estate: The Roadhouse shows how a small footprint in an emerging neighborhood offers a creative porthole: Feeling the sense of being touched. This place has the touch of brilliance. In the diagonal footprint of a two pump gas station, where little else can work, this group used the barest essentials to craft brilliance. Next door, a group of galleries are working to open this summer. This movement has been seen before: SoHo, TriBeCa, High Line. The Roadhouse confirms what others are starting to see - there is something special happening on Troutman St.

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