

# The Chinatowns of New York City

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New York has been a gateway for immigrants to the Americas for four centuries, and those newcomers frequently settled in ethnic enclaves that retained much of the character of their home countries. Manhattan's Chinatown was a center for Chinese life during the strict immigration policies of the first half of the 20th century. A dramatic loosening of those restrictions beginning in 1965 paved the way for an influx of immigrants that subsequently formed new Chinatowns in Queens and Brooklyn. These areas of dense Chinese population and Chinese businesses continue to be practical centers of commerce, vibrant expressions of identity, and exoticized locales that attract natives and visitors alike.

## Manhattan's Chinatown

- New York City's first Chinatown began in the mid 19th century with the arrival of Chinese sailors in the existing Five Points slum.
- The community was augmented by new arrivals until the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, although the community continued to thrive.
- Business owners and city leaders continue to parlay exoticism to make Manhattan's Chinatown one of the city's major tourist attractions.



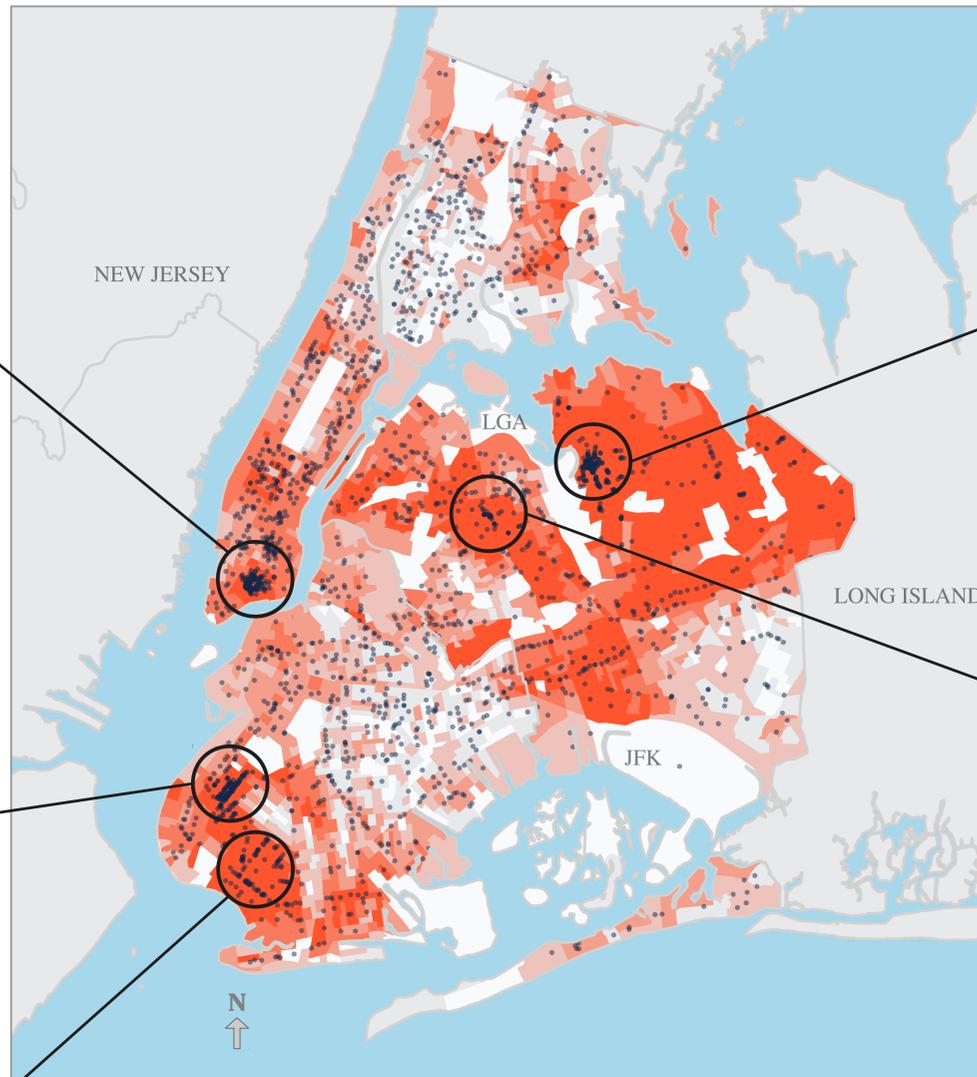
## Sunset Park, Brooklyn

- Sunset Park developed over the late 19th and early 20th centuries adjacent to the working Brooklyn waterfront, until deindustrialization led to a dramatic decline in the neighborhood following the Second World War.
- Chinese owners of garment factories priced out of Manhattan relocated to this derelict area along Eighth Avenue, with a direct subway connection to Manhattan's Chinatown being an added plus.
- The passage of NAFTA in 1994 decimated the US garment industry, but the neighborhood has remained a hub for Cantonese speakers and business owners from Hong Kong and mainland China.



## Bensonhurst / Sheepshead Bay

- Growth and rising rents in Sunset Park subsequently led to notable growth in Chinese business along Avenue U in the early 21st century.



### Asian Residents

- < 2 %
- < 5 %
- < 11 %
- < 25 %
- < 85 %
- Chinese Restaurants

## Flushing, Queens

- Flushing was settled by the Dutch in the mid 17th century, not long after their arrival in the region.
- The town of Flushing was consolidated into Queens County when Queens became a borough of New York City in 1898.
- Subsequent construction of bridges and rail lines in the early 20th century facilitated rapid residential growth.
- Taiwanese immigrants began arriving in the 1970s, forming the foundation for the city's first satellite Chinatown here. Korean immigrants have also flocked to the neighborhood in recent years.



## Elmhurst, Queens

- As growth in Flushing's Chinatown reached a peak in the 1990s, Taiwanese businessmen began to take an interest in this area that was already the landing site for immigrants from dozens of nations around the world.



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