

The Coolest Place to Eat Is Outside an Abandoned Smallpox Hospital

By STEVE CUOZZO | September 3, 2015



The sweetest spot in town to enjoy al fresco snacking in solitude is the Great Performances Katchkie Farm truck in Roosevelt Island's Four Freedoms Park.

There's only one problem: The truck's open only on Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m to 5 p.m. What a pity!

The bright-green van is a 15-minute stroll south of the tram and F train stations. It offers cheap, organically produced "goodness from the farm" on a patio set with tables and cheery red umbrellas.

The magical setting is tucked between the romantic smallpox hospital ruin and a beautiful, endless lawn rolling to the island's southern tip.

While the "Great Performances" name conjures cheering audiences at venues like Lincoln Center, the caterer's Four Freedoms noshing site is uncannily still except for the whisper of zephyrs off the East River.

It feels a million miles from the bright lights, even though the view takes in the UN, the Chrysler Building, supertall 432 Park Ave. and the giant Pepsi-Cola sign in Long Island City.

Limited but winning food choices include a yummy \$3 hot dog best enjoyed with grain mustard out of a squeeze bottle; a crackling salad of sorghum grains, tomato, zucchini, yellow squash and corn; and a charred-chicken sandwich with a touch of smoky barbecue sauce.

Wash them down with refreshing raspberry-herb lemonade served in a plasticlike vessel, which reads, "Cups made from plants make a difference."

What would really make a difference is to let us enjoy it for more than just 12 hours a week.

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