

8 Rob's New York podcast

Presenter: Hi there, this is Rob, and today's podcast is about my recent trip to New York, the city that never sleeps, or "The Big Apple", as it's often called. "Why the Big Apple?", I hear you ask. Good question, and in fact I can't really give you a straight answer on this one. First thing, however, is that it has nothing to do with high-tech company Apple, which is based in California anyway – right on the other side of the USA, thousands of miles away. No, the name "The Big Apple" is indeed a lot older; some people say it comes from the horse races in the 1920s, where the winner of the race won the "Big Apple", which referred to a nice little sum of prize money. Others say that the name was invented about ten years later by jazz musicians who referred to New York as "The Big Apple" in their songs. You see, it's not really clear where the term came from.

However, what we know for sure is this: In the 1970s, there was a big advertising campaign which promoted New York as "The Big Apple". And what you could see on the posters was indeed a big juicy apple, standing for New York and promoting it so to speak as a "yummy" tourist attraction, a place you just had to visit.

In order to produce an interesting podcast for you, I took to the streets of New York and asked people if "The Big Apple" was really such a great place to live in. And here is what they told me.

First I asked Andy, who has been living in Manhattan for five years now, and he told me that living in New York was great but also a bit of a challenge.

Andy: Yeah, New York is a great place if you like going out a lot and do things. I mean the place is full of activities. You can go on boat tours, visit museums and theatres, plus there is an awesome variety of restaurants, offering food from all over the world. And that brings me to what I love most about New York. It's the fact that New York is a city of immigrants, built by people from all over the world, with about 200 languages spoken ... so many different cultures in just one place. I just love it. New York is one great multicultural experience.

On the other hand, New York is extremely expensive. Even a small apartment costs a lot of money, and also things you need for your everyday life are more expensive than in most other parts of the US.

And another problem is the transport system, mostly the subway and our bus services. I mean, there are normally about 5 million people taking a subway train every day, which is quite a lot. So, no wonder the trains are late at times. And the streets are of course crowded during the day, especially at rush hour. But as a true New Yorker, you learn to live with that. I supposed it's just like in any other big city.

Presenter: As you can see, New York is just like London in the UK, an interesting place but super expensive. But then there are reasons why some people want to live here.

Let's listen to Lilly, who was actually born in Brooklyn.

Lilly: As a native New Yorker, I can only say one thing: It's the best city in the world - well, at least the best city I know. Why so? There are so many opportunities for nearly everything. If you want a job, there are loads and loads of them. If you want to meet interesting people, New York is full of them. If you want to see the greatest theatre shows or musicals, then Broadway is the place to go.

Presenter: But are there any shortcomings when it comes to living in New York?

Lilly: As I said, there are lots of great opportunities when it comes to realizing your potential, like becoming a pop star or starting a film career. Or

just getting a great job. However, there is a lot of competition, too. I mean, two of my friends act in Broadway shows, but they still have to work in cafés to be able to pay their rent. That's because there are so many other good actors and actresses around here. So much competition! What I would say is that even if you are really, really good at something, in New York there are always lots of other people who are just as good as you are or even better. So, yeah, competition is strong.

As it says in Frank Sinatra's famous song "New York": if you can make it here, you'll make it anywhere. And really, I think that's true. New York is tough and competitive, but if you have the energy, the motivation and the skills, you can live your dream.

Presenter: Right, that's all for today. Thanks for listening! Bye.