36 Hours
New York City

By AMY VIRSHUP

[Image: A picture of a Lincoln Center interior with sculptures and a man looking at a sculpture]

Friday
5 p.m.
Get Your Tickets
As part of its anniversary celebration, Lincoln Center has remade the grim Harmony Atrium just southeast of the main campus (Broadway between 62nd and 63rd Streets) into a visitors' center and ticketing space named for David Rubenstein (that's what you get when you give $10 million). Along with a face-lift, the atrium got a new box office, selling same-day discount tickets at 25 to 30 percent off regular prices (with a two-ticket-per-person limit) for performances at Lincoln Center and all its constituent organizations — including the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic and the City Opera (newlincolncenter.org/live/). Check what's on and pick up a pair.

6 p.m.
Pretheater Prix Fixe
Daniel Boulud's New York culinary empire now runs from the Bowery to the Upper East Side.Just across from Lincoln Center, his Bar Boulud (1000 Broadway near 6th Street; 212-685-0300; www.danielleynyc.com) is the perfect perch for a pre-performance meal. Terrines, sliced meats and cheeses (the last divided into categories like Bloomy, Stinky and Old & Hard) are the heart of the menu, but there's also a $42 three-course prix-fixe option that includes such classic choices as a salad nicoise, roasted chicken breast and house-made ice cream or sorbet. For the full experience, sit at the charcuterie bar where the view includes fromage de tête "Gilles Verot" (that's headcheese for those who don't speak French). Afterward, grab a drink at the Alice Tully Hall lobby bar before curtain time.

Saturday
10 a.m.
Breakfast, Retro-Style
The Standard Grill is tucked under the High Line at the base of the Standard Hotel (848 Washington Street at West 14th Street; 212-945-4100; www.thestandardgrill.com). Despite the hotel's Brutalism-Meets-Miami-Beach exterior, the dining room is pure retro: a tile-vaulted ceiling, penny (as in real pennies) floor, red leather banquettes. The menu is pleasingly retro, too: Try warm cinnamon-and-sugar-crusted doughnuts made on the spot — 3 for $6 — or maybe ultra-sweet French toast with bananas and rum sauce, $10.
11 a.m.  Walk Along the Tracks
Just down the block at the corner of Gansevoort and Washington Streets are the southernmost stairs to the High Line, the immensely popular linear park created on what was once an abandoned freight rail line. After a decade-long effort, the first section of the park (running from Gansevoort to 20th Street) opened in June; on summer weekends as many as 20,000 people a day visit the park. The High Line offers a quieter, almost derelict beauty, with bare tree limbs and the seed heads of grasses swaying in the wind off the Hudson. Winter hours are from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.; www.thehighline.org.

1 p.m.  Brooklyn Boutiques
Once known as the city of churches, Brooklyn these days might be called the borough of boutiques. For a taste of the local aesthetic, check out Court Street in the Cobble Hill neighborhood (take the 3/3 or 4/5 trains to Borough Hall and then walk south along Court to Atlantic). At Serene Rose (200 Court; 718-522-5907; www.serenerose.com), a dandy pair of engravings hand crocheted from gold-filled wire ($10) would be the perfect accent to one of the party frocks. Tiny Fork & Pencil (211a Court; 718-483-8855; forkandpencilm.com) sells housewares, toys and antiques. The proceeds go to support local charities. Papel New York (225 Court; 718-422-0255; papelnewyork.com) sells sleek paper goods, including sheets of wrapping paper ($2.50 to $3 a sheet) that will class up even the smallest of gifts. Need to relax? The Stumptown Coffee at Cafe Pedlar (210 Court; 718-557-7128; cafepedlar.com) is roasted nearby in Red Hook, and you can pick up a bag of Hair Bender blend beans ($12 for 12 ounces) along with your espresso ($2.50). Or stop at the Chocolate Room (269 Court; 718-246-2608; www.thechocolateroombrooklyn.com), which sells its own homemade chocolate caramel popcorn ($4.50 for a quarter-pound bag).

8 p.m.  Seafood on the Park
Sleek and highly polished, Marea (240 Central Park South; 212-582-5100; www.marea-ny.com), in the old San Domingo space just east of Columbus Circle, is like some movie version of New York except, yes, that really is a fallen mohogin pitching new investors at the table next to yours. The menu is devoted to an Italian spin on fish. Share an order of the unctious ricci (sea urchin, lardo and sea salt draped bruschetta-like over toast; $15), then choose among the crude (raw fish), oysters and antipasti. For a main course you can get a whole fish roasted or sauteed, then choose your sauce (the limone is good with the Dover side) and side dish. The four-course prix fixe is $92.

10 p.m.  Cocktails and Codes
If you’re talking cocktails in New York these days, you need to know two words: speakeasy and artisinal. Behind hidden entrances requiring secret codes, bartenders are mixing up concoctions with names like Corpse Reviver No. 2 (gin, Cointreau, Lillet Blanc, lemon and absinthe) that only seem old-fashioned. That particular drink ($10) is assembled by the garage-crewed bartenders at Little Branch (20 Seventh Avenue South at Leroy Street; 212-923-4500). Cash only.

Sunday
10 a.m.  Comfort Food
The name’s an oxymoron and the kitchen is probably smaller than yours, but Little Giant (35 Orchard Street at the corner of Broome; 212-226-5047; www.littlegiantnyc.com) turns out slightly refined comfort food that has crowds piling up on the sidewalks of the gentrifying Lower East Side. Little Giant serves a “Trucker’s Breakfast” ($10), but the bacon with it will be hand sliced and the mushrooms sautéed. Cash only.

11 a.m.  Art Scene Stroll
The anchor of the Lower East Side art scene is the New Museum of Contemporary Art (235 Bowery at Prince Street; 212-233-1222; www.newmuseum.org), designed by the Japanese firm Sanaz to look like a series of off-kilter boxes, which opened to raves in 2007. In Chelsea remains the hot spot for grand gesture galleries — old industrial spaces with room for massive pieces — the Lower East Side offers a growing number of storefront spots, where artists and galleries with big ambitions work small for now. The Rachel Uffner Gallery at 47 Orchard Street (212-774-0664; racheluffnergallery.com) has been drawing strong reviews for its stable of artists, and the Bridge Gallery at 98 Orchard Street (212-274-6578; bridgegallery.com) specializes in architecture and design.

1 p.m.  Sugar Rush
A giant Gummi rat. How New York is that? You can pick one up to take home, along with gummy piec sticks (99 cents), wax fangs, Mallo Cups and classics like Hot Tamales and Mike and Ikes at Economy Candy (106 Rivington Street; 212-254-1531; www.economycandy.com). Crammed with what seems like every candy bar ever known, plus hard candies by the pound, nuts and dried fruits, it’s a playground for the sugar-obsessed.