

## Spaces We Love: The Bronx Zoo

BY SHIRA LEVINE, TUESDAY OCT. 13, 2009

FAMILY, TRAVEL, ANIMALS, ZOO, BRONX ZOO, NEW YORK CITY, SPACES WE LOVE, FAMILY TRAVEL

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The Bronx Zoo feels so otherworldly, that visitors often comment aloud about how authentically *not* New York it feels. A city zoo might sound like grounds for a PETA protest, but the Bronx Zoo accommodates its 4,000-plus animals better than the shoebox-realty reality of most Manhattan constituents. Lions, tigers and bears roam (relatively) freely amongst biodiversity – all 265 fantastically foliaged acres — that feel more wildlife preserve than concrete jungle. It's completely normal for a flock of cavalier peacocks to strut past tourists without acknowledgment. Those birds are the zoo's Where's Waldos: Spot them nesting with gazelles,

prairie dogs and rhinos. Who knew a peacock and lioness could live harmoniously without ruffling a feather?

Things can get way meta watching human families get entertained by baboons and gibbons licking and grooming their nether regions. There is ample PC voyeurism as well: Sea lion enrichment, primate training and penguin feeding. New exhibits like Madagascar with its notoriously stinky lemur lair feels almost over-populated, as it's impossible not to spot the red-ruffed and ring-tailed little fellows who apparently pride themselves on their stench. A more pleasant zoo gem is the 6.5 acre Congo Gorilla Forest. It's home to not just 22 gorillas, but an additional 54 species, as well as the largest man-made rainforest in the world. In both exhibits, visitors have options on directing a portion of their admission fees to protect those sensitive ecosystems.

Zoo amenities include the summer seasonal Children's Zoo, Skyfari cable cars, Wild Asia and Bengali Express seasonal monorails which cruise close-up to hungry top-of-the-food-chain animals. Speaking of...BYOLunch: Zoo animals eat healthier than humans here, where fast food is our only option. Alternatively, wander on over to Arthur Avenue, the Bronx's far more authentic Little Italy, for fantastic fresh clams and gut-busting dinners. [[BronxZoo.com](#)]

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Sue Rhodes  
October 14, 2009 Nicely done. It was a very enjoyable visit.

