

Rockaway Beach Seeing Community Revival

ROCKAWAY BEACH, NY (CBS 2) – [Rockaway Beach](#) in Queens has long been written off by many as a community in decline, but now things are looking up.

There's plenty of action on Rockaway Beach and its boardwalk, just a cool subway ride away from [Manhattan](#) without hassle of the [Hamptons](#) or its prices.

"We don't have \$5 cups of coffee here. You can come here and get a real cup of coffee that you can afford, you don't have to take out a home mortgage to eat," said Rockaway community board manager John Gaska.

Many who remember Rockaway Beach's rough reputation are now putting a cautious toe back in its waters and they like what they see.

"I think it's nicer than I thought it would be," said Michael Schaff. "I was expecting it to be more crowded, maybe a little more trash on the beach, but it's really nice."

"I wasn't sure what to expect and we came out and the beach looked perfect," said Prasanna Subramanian.

"It looks a lot more happening than what I heard about when I was a kid," said Matt Caesar.

There are new restaurants in town and along the boardwalk as [Brooklyn](#) restaurant owners branch out with new takes on beach food.

Rippers offers fresh juice drinks and grass-fed beef burgers. "People are really happy to have choices, healthy choices, better choices," said owner Michelle Cortez.

Rockaway Beach's comeback began with the [influx of surfers](#) after the city allowed surfing in two areas. Soon, others followed.

"As surfers, we're hoping that the city sees that the surfing community can develop a community," said Steve Stathis. "We hope that they recognize us and they give us more beaches to surf on."

Developers took notice and new oceanfront condos are selling briskly.

“They come down here, their blood pressure drops by 20 points and they can breathe a little easier and they say this is really what life is supposed to be about,” said developer Michael Kerris.

Some old timers like what they see.

“Very good changes, new buildings and the situation is much safer, much better,” said Vladimir Rosenstein.

Some locals are happy to show day-trippers around but they say you’ve got to draw the line somewhere. “We keep the secret spots to our selves, locals only,” said John Guierrez.

Many locals say they don’t worry about outsiders changing Rockaway Beach’s spirit, that it is still true to its humble roots. But they say it well deserves its day in the sun.

There’s one other big plus. All seven miles of Rockaway Beach is free.