

Food**This NYC pickle crawl is a very big dill**

“It’s pickles, so what’s not to like?” said 28-year-old tour organizer and budding pickle influencer Linus Gordon, who is Jewish.

By [Joseph Strauss](#) April 22, 2025



Budding pickle influencer Linus Gordon, 28 (center, holding inflatable pickle) spent about a month planning out the NYC Pickle Crawl, which started at Penn Station and wound through the Lower East Side. (Joseph Strauss)

On a rainy recent Saturday, amid the routine hustle and bustle of Penn Station’s Moynihan Train Hall, one thing stood out from the crowd: a massive inflatable pickle.

The slightly anthropomorphized pickle, which towered over droves of travellers and commuters, served as something of a beacon, drawing some 20 New Yorkers — dressed in every imaginable shade of green — to the meeting spot of the first NYC Pickle Crawl created by Linus Gordon, a 28-year-old [budding pickle influencer](#).

“It’s pickles, so what’s not to like?” Gordon, who is Jewish, told the New York Jewish Week.

A lifetime pickle-lover, Gordon — a former track star who grew up in a Reconstructionist Jewish family in Malibu, California — moved to New York in December for his work as a software engineer. Soon after settling downtown, he found himself making pickle videos after an online interaction with Bob’s Pickle Pops landed him an unexpected delivery of 22 pounds of their pickle-flavored popsicles. (Packed with sodium and high in

electrolytes, [pickles and pickle juice are often promoted as a healthy way to recover from a tough workout.](#))

Inspired by the haul, Gordon began posting pickle-themed content on social media. He picked up real buzz as a pickle influencer in early March, when his third video — in which [he correctly identified brands of jarred pickles simply by drinking their brine](#) — garnered around 4 million views between Instagram and TikTok.

“I just want to make my mother proud,” Gordon said about his growing social media presence. “It’s become a good creative outlet for me, and it’s fun to make content that hopefully makes people smile.”

The idea to lead an IRL pickle crawl came from a follower’s suggestion. Gordon, who said he wants to “continue to form friendships between strangers,” started gauging interest from his roughly 10,000 followers, and after about a month of planning, the tour came to fruition earlier this month.

The concept of Gordon’s pickle crawl was fairly straightforward: Participants, who learned of the tour on Gordon’s social media, and paid \$24, would go from business to business, mostly within the Lower East Side, and sample pickles, pickled foods and pickle-flavored foods. Water bottles were strongly encouraged.

After some mingling and a round of refreshments at Jacob’s Pickles at Moynihan Train Hall — consisting of fried pickles followed by cups of [pickle-flavored ice cream](#) — the group huddled around Gordon to embark on the next leg of our journey. The destination: Katz’s Deli.

To get there, the pickle crawlers migrated through Penn Station to the E train platform, the outstretched inflatable leading the way. Along the way, Gordon offered leftover goodies to passersby, some of whom could not resist snapping a quick photo of this green-clad convoy.

This oh-so New York experience only got New Yorkier when we arrived at the platform: The next train would not come for 17 minutes.

But the wait, which would normally be an aggravation, gave us a natural moment to introduce ourselves to one another. We learned each other’s names and what brought us to the tour. Many people’s answer, predictably, was a love of pickles.

Participants exchanged their personal pickle picks, sharing their favorite brands and types. Some people shared tips on unsealing a jar that just won’t open. (I shared a favorite childhood anecdote: My siblings and I used to fill ice cube trays with pickle juice. And on

the first day of every month, we would celebrate our very own made-up holiday, “Pickle Day.”)

While Jews did not invent pickles, nor the pickling process — [we can thank the ancient Mesopotamians for that](#) — the history of the salty snack is nonetheless intertwined with the history of New York Jews, who brought pickles over from Eastern Europe around the turn of the 20th century and helped popularize them in the United States.

“When [Jewish immigrants] came in 1910, they came here with no skills,” Alan Kaufman, owner of The Pickle Guys, [told JTA back in 2012](#). “They did what they knew how to do: They made pickles. It’s an inexpensive item to make; it’s an inexpensive item to buy. And when people buy it, it tastes like home.”

Pickles have remained a popular food in the century since, and are a staple at Jewish delis across the city and the country.

But that’s not all: Pickles have recently emerged as a beloved item beyond the realm of food. Today, [consumers can buy pickle-themed clothes, lip balm and even marijuana paraphernalia](#). They’ve become a theme for bachelorette and bar/bat mitzvah parties. According to The Spectator, [while avocados were “the defining food of millennials,” Gen Z “worships” pickles](#).

In other words, pickles have become fashionable — for all ages — and nowhere was that more evident than on the NYC Pickle Crawl, where participants wore hats, shirts and even

underwear covered in cartoon pickles.



Stops on the pickle crawl included Jacob's Pickles, Katz's Deli, The Pickle Guys and 169 Bar. (Joseph Strauss)

Clay Reyes, who would later win the “best dressed” award among the pickle crawlers, wore little pickle earrings as an accent to her all-green outfit. And while Reyes isn’t Jewish she spoke to the omnipresence — and her appreciation — of Jewish delis in the city. “I mean I love pickles, I’m from New York!” she said. “Like there’s pickles, Jewish delis everywhere growing up, and it’s just good.”

Once the group finally arrived at Katz’s Deli, we each tried a sour and a half-sour pickle. “I think they’ve probably had 100 years to perfect them, so I won’t challenge anything they do with that,” said pickle crawler Brendan Heddle, whose favorite item from the afternoon was the Katz’s half-sour.

From there, the crawl continued on foot to [The Pickle Guys, the last remaining pickle store on the Lower East Side’s famed Essex Street](#), which was [once known as the Pickle District](#). As we stood outside eating platters of pickled green beans and mango, the group was treated to a surprise performance by Jewish rapper and comedian [Kosha Dillz, of Subway Seder fame](#), who delivered a pickle-heavy freestyle that caught the attention of everyone at the busy intersection of Essex and Grand streets.



Husband-and-wife Spencer Howard and Lori Linkewer agreed that the Kosha Dillz cameo was the standout moment of the tour. “It’s one of those things you see on Instagram and you’re like, ‘When am I ever gonna run into this?’ And we were part of it,” Howard said.

Linkewer added, “It was a very New York moment.”

Once the performance had wrapped up and all pickle platters had been consumed, we walked to 169 Bar, the last stop on the crawl, for a round of pickle martinis. There, finally,

Gordon — who had pre-arranged the orders at each business — could sit back and relax. Though he didn't quite break even on his first pickle crawl, Gordon nonetheless deemed the afternoon a success, adding that he enjoyed "spreading the pickle spirit."

"I just don't have a memory of when I didn't love pickles this much," Gordon said.

"When I was a little kid — my dad's from Coney Island — he brought us to New York, and I remember walking in the cold to Guss' Pickles," Gordon said of [the iconic pickle spot that left the Lower East Side in 2009, after 85 years in business there](#). (Today, you can still get Guss' Pickles at Whole Foods, [or by the gallon via Goldbelly](#).)

Gordon said he'd "like to do another [pickle crawl] in the future in some form, and perhaps expand it a little so that more people can attend." In the meantime, Gordon has continued regularly posting pickle-related content and hopes to "plan other in-person events."

Asked to pick a favorite pickle from the crawl, Gordon took the diplomatic route: "It might be too early in my pickle career to make an alliance with a single place."

He added, "But they were all really good."