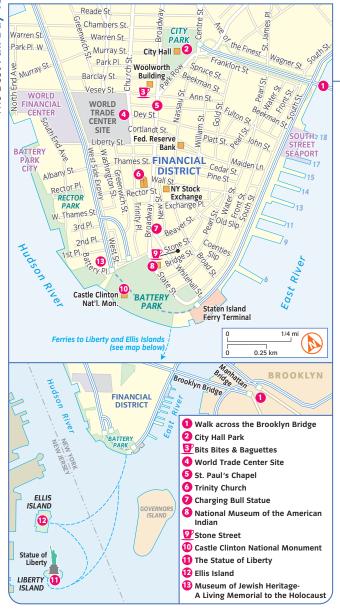
# The Best Full-Day Tours



# The Best in One Day



The most wonderful—and maddening—thing about New York? The endless number of choices. My first love is history, and to explore the city's beginnings, head first to Lower Manhattan, with its Dutch roots and cobblestoned streets. But this area of New York is not limited to centuries-old structures frozen in time; it's also the dynamic center of city government and world finance. START: Subway A or C to High St. in Brooklyn.

1 \*\* Walk across the Brooklyn Bridge. For a glorious view of New York City, you can't beat the 30-minute walk across the Brooklyn Bridge. The celebrated suspension bridge is a wonder in itself, with its Gothic-inspired towers, Maine granite, and intricate web of steel cables. See p 108. Subway: A/C to High St. in Brooklyn.

2 City Hall Park. City Hall has been the seat of NYC government since 1812. Security concerns prevent visitors from touring inside, but you can get close enough to appreciate the handsome French Renaissance exterior, built from 1803 to 1811. Abraham Lincoln was laid in state in the soaring rotunda. Equally grand is the colossal Municipal Building (1 Centre St. at Chambers),

The Municipal Building straddles a busy city street.

built on the other side of Centre Street in 1915 by McKim, Mead and White; it was the celebrated firm's first "skyscraper." Across Broadway at no. 233 is that temple of commerce known as the \* Woolworth Building. Built on the back of a nickel-and-dime empire in 1913, this neo-Gothic masterpiece is the work of Cass Gilbert. At press time, the public was not allowed inside the building. City Hall Park: btwn Broadway & Park Row.

## **4** ★ World Trade Center Site.

The Twin Towers once dominated the city's skyline, and visitors from around the world have made pilgrimages to the vast, gaping hole left after their destruction during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The Wall of Heroes lists the names of those who died that day; there are also photos of the construction of the World Trade Center in the 1960s (it opened in 1972). Daniel Libeskind's proposed 1.776-foot-tall Freedom Tower will eventually stand here, along with a permanent memorial entitled Reflecting Absence, Work on the site is expected to last till 2015. Bounded by Church, Barclay, Liberty, & West sts. 212/484-1222. www. nycvisit.com or www.downtownny. com. Subway A/C to World Trade Center; N/R to Cortland St.



 ★ St. Paul's Chapel. This is Manhattan's only surviving pre-Revolutionary (1766) church. Built to resemble London's St. Martin-in-the-Fields, with an elegant Georgian interior, the chapel was a refuge for rescue workers after September 11, and is now home to the Unwavering Spirit exhibit, which honors those who died and those who tried to save them. 45 min. 209 Broadway (at Fulton St.). 2 212/233-4164. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 9am-4pm. Free concerts Mon 1-2pm. www.saint paulschapel.org. Subway: 2/3 to Park Place: 1/9/4/5/A to Fulton St/ Broadway Nassau.

★★ Trinity Church. This neo-Gothic marvel was consecrated in 1846 and is still active today. The main doors, modeled on the doors in Florence's Baptistery, are decorated with biblical scenes; inside are splendid stained-glass windows. Broadway (at Wall St.). 7am-6pm daily. www.trinitywallstreet.com. Subway: 4/5 to Wall St.

↑ Charging Bull Statue. This Wall Street statue is a favorite photo op for visitors. It's across from the Museum of American Financial History, where you can explore New York's titanic growth as a financial capital (the Stock Market itself is closed to visitors for security reasons). ◆ 45 min. 28 Broadway (at Bowling Green Park). ◆ 212/908-4100. www.financialhistory.org. Tues-Sat 10am-4pm. \$2 admission. Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 2/3 to Wall Street.

8 \*\* kids National Museum of the American Indian.
This Smithsonian

Institution museum is a little-known New York treasure. Not only does the collection span more



Founding Father Alexander Hamilton is buried at Trinity Church.

than 10,000 years of Native heritage, it's housed in a glorious 1907 Beaux Arts building designed by Cass Gilbert. 1 Inn. 1 Bowling Green. 212/514-3700. www.american indian.si.edu. Free admission. Daily 10am–5pm (Thurs 8pm). Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

▼ \* Stone Street. This is a historic cobblestoned street filled with restaurants. One of the best is Cassis, a charming bistro where you can enjoy a salad or pasta dish. 52 Stone St. (btwn William & Pearl sts.) 2 212/425-3663. \$-\$\$.

(1) Castle Clinton National Monument. The fort was built between 1808 and 1811 to guard New York Harbor from British forces—but it never had to defend itself. It has served as everything from an immigration landing center



to an opera house to an aquarium. Southern tip of Battery Park. 22 212/344-7220. Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

11 ★ kids The Statue of Liberty. For the millions who arrived in New York by ship, Lady Liberty was their first glimpse of America, A gift from France to the United States, the statue was designed by sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi and unveiled on October 28, 1886. Visitors now have access to the base of the statue and can explore the Statue of Liberty Museum, peer into the inner structure through a glass ceiling near the base of the statue, and enjoy views from the observation deck. Tip: The Staten Island Ferry (a free 25 min. trip) provides spectacular skyline views of Manhattan) and is a wonderful way to see the harbor. You'll pass by (though not stop at) the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Check www. siferry.com for more information. 1 hr. (ferry ride: 15 min.). On Liberty Island in New York Harbor. Buy tickets online or in Castle Clinton National Monument (see above). 212/363-3200 (general info), or 212/269-5755 (ticket/ferry info). www. nps.gov/stli or www.statueofliberty ferry.com. Free admission: ferry ticket to Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, \$4 children 3-17. Daily 9am-5pm (last ferry departs around 4pm); extended hours in summer. Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

of the immigrants; the American Immigrant Wall of Honor, which commemorates more than 500,000 immigrants and their families; and the American Family Immigration Center, where interactive exhibits can help you research your own family history. 90 min. (ferry ride: 10 min. from Liberty Island) 212/363-3200. www.nps.gov/elis or www.ellisisland. org. For tickets, see Statue of Liberty, above. Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

 ★★ Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. Dedicated to teaching people of all backgrounds about 20th-century Jewish life, this award-winning museum was designed in a six-sided shape to symbolize the Star of David and honor the six million lews who died in the Holocaust. Inside are photos, artifacts, and moving accounts from survivors. A second-story stone garden—where each of the hollowed-out boulders has a tree growing out of it—overlooks New York Harbor. @ 90 min. 36 Battery Place. 容 646/437-4200. www.mihnyc.org. Admission \$10 adults, \$7 seniors, \$5 students, free for children under 5. Sun-Wed 10am-5:45pm: Thurs 10am-8pm: Fri & eves of Jewish holidays 10am-3pm. Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage.



# The Best in Two Days



f Lower Manhattan is the city's historic heart, uptown is its artistic soul. It's also home to Central Park, an urban oasis that recharges body and mind. This part of town has a wealth of museums, so to avoid burnout, decide which ones you want to focus on before heading out. If you have kids in tow, I suggest heading to the American Museum of Natural History. START: Subway 4, 5, or 6 to 86th Street.

1 ★★★ kids Metropolitan Museum of Art. At 1.6 million square feet, this is the largest museum in the Western Hemisphere, attracting five million visitors annually. Nearly all the world's cultures through the ages are on display—from Egyptian mummies to ancient Greek statuary to Islamic carvings to Renaissance paintings to Native American masks to 20thcentury decorative arts-and masterpieces are the rule. You could go once a week for a lifetime and still find something new on each visit. My suggestion: To avoid museum burnout, identify two collections to see, and browse other exhibits on

The glass-walled gallery containing the Temple of Dendur has striking Central Park views. your way to them. Everyone should see the Temple of Dendur, the jewel of the Egyptian collection. But let personal preference be your guide to the rest. My favorite paintings are in the American wing: John Singer Sargent's portrait Madame X and Frederic Church's landscape The Heart of the Andes. For a full tour of the Met. see p 32. 2½ hr. Fifth Ave. (at 82nd St.). 容 212/535-7710. www.metmuseum.org. Admission \$12 adults. \$7 seniors & students. free for children under 12. Sun, Holiday Mon (Labor Day, Memorial Day, & so forth). & Tues-Thurs 9:30am-5:30pm; Fri-Sat 9:30am-9pm. Subway: 4/5/6 to 86th St. Bus: M1/2/3/4.

ZEating at the Met. If you're visiting between May and October, check out the Roof Garden's casual café/bar (\$) and breathtaking treetop view of Central Park. Year-round you can get lunch at the ground-floor cafeteria (\$) or at the elegant Petrie Court Café (№ 212/570-3964; \$\$), which overlooks Central Park.

3 \*\*\* Kids Central Park. Manhattanites may not have yards, but they do have this glorious swath of green. Designed by Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux in the 1850s, the park is 2½ miles long (extending from 59th to 110th sts.) and a half-mile wide (from Fifth Ave. to Central Park West). It encompasses a zoo, a carousel, two iceskating rinks, restaurants, children's



playgrounds, even theaters. See p 100 for a full tour.

4 The Obelisk, Also called Cleopatra's Needle, this 69-foot obelisk is reached by following the path behind the Met leading west. Originally erected in Heliopolis. Egypt around 1475 B.C., it was given to the city by the khedive of Egypt in 1880. Continue on the path to the Great Lawn. site of countless softball games, concerts, and peaceful political protests.

 ★ Belvedere Castle. Built by Calvert Vaux in 1869, this fanciful medieval-style fortress-in-miniature sits at the highest point in the park and offers sweeping views. The many birds that call this area home led to the creation of a bird-watching and educational center in the Castle's ranger station. To get here, follow the path across East Drive and walk west

6 Shakespeare Garden. Next to Belvedere Castle, you'll find this garden, where the only flowers and plants in evidence are those mentioned in the Bard's plays.

 ★★ The Lake. South of the garden, you'll cross the 79th Street Transverse Road to reach The Lake. its perimeter pathway lined with weeping willows

The Lake, with Bow Bridge in the background. and Japanese cherry trees. The neo-Victorian Loeb Boathouse at the east end of the Lake rents rowboats and bicycles; on summer evenings, you can arrange gondola rides. Walk

back up to the 79th Street Transverse Road and follow it west; it exits the park at 81st Street and

Central Park West.

8 ★★★ kids American Museum of Natural History. If you can get past the spectacular

entrance—a Barosaurus, the world's largest freestanding dinosaur exhibit—you'll have plenty more to see. Founded in 1869, the AMNH houses the world's greatest natural science collection in a square-block group of buildings made of whimsical towers and turrets, pink granite, and red brick. The diversity of the holdings is astounding: some 36 million

> scopic organisms to the world's largest cut gem, the Brazilian Princess Topaz (21,005 carats). If you only see one exhibit, make it the

> > \* dinosaurs, which take up the entire fourth

The dinosaurs and the Hall of Ocean Life are must-sees at the AMNH



floor. 2 hr. Central Park West (btwn 77th & 81st sts.). 212/769-5100. www.amnh.org. Admission (includes entrance to Rose Center, below) \$12 adults, \$9 seniors & students, \$7 chidren 2–12; Space Show (see below) & museum admission \$19 adults, \$14 seniors & students, \$12 children under 12. Daily 10am–5:45pm (Rose Center open Fri to 8:45pm). Subway: B/C to 81st St.

97 kids Museum Food Court.

The food court has a selection of fresh salads, pizzas, hot entrees, sandwiches, even sushi. Naturally there's a kids' menu. \$.

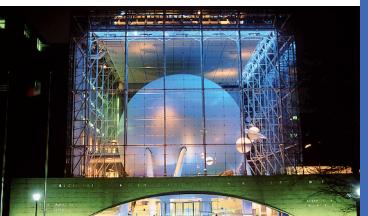
10 ★★ 1835 Rose Center for Earth and Space. Even if you're suffering from museum overload, the Rose Center will lift your spirits. Attached to the American Museum of Natural History, this four-story planetarium is an astonishing sight: a giant sphere in a glass square. Of the Center's several shows, a perennial favorite is "Are We Alone?" narrated by Harrison Ford.

(1) Dakota Apartments. With its dark and dramatic gables, dormers, and oriel windows, this 1884 apartment house is one of the city's

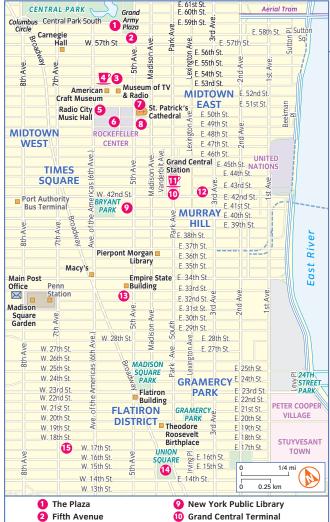
legendary landmarks. Its most famous resident, John Lennon, was gunned down next to the entrance on December 8, 1980; Yoko Ono still lives here. 1 W. 72nd St. (at Central Park West). Subway: 1/2/3/4 to 72nd St.

② ★★ Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. New York has countless performing arts venues, but none so revered as Lincoln Center. After a long day on your feet, you can relax on the outdoor plaza in front of the fountains. At night and at Christmas the light displays are particularly lovely, and on some summer evenings there's ballroom dancing. See p 27.

The Rose Center for Earth and Space.



# The Best in Three Days



- Museum of Modern Art.
- Café 2
- Radio City Music Hall
- 6 Rockefeller Center
- 5t. Patrick's Cathedral
- Saks Fifth Avenue

- W Grand Central food court
- (2) Chrysler Building
- Empire State Building
- Union Square Greenmarket
- 15 Rubin Museum of Art

You've discovered downtown and uptown, and now it's time to hit midtown, the city's business and commercial center. But it's not all about corporate skyscrapers and designer shops; this tour will also introduce you to many quintessential New York landmarks.

START: Subway N. R. or W to Fifth Avenue/59th Street.

1 \* The Plaza. There's no denying the glamour of the Big Apple's most famous hotel. This 1907 landmark French Renaissance palace has hosted royalty, celebrities, and a legion of honeymooners. Scott and Zelda frolicked in the Pulitzer Fountain out front. 768 Fifth Ave. (at Central Park South). Subway: N/R/W to Fifth Ave./59th St.

2 ★★ Fifth Avenue. New York's most famous style-and-shopping artery starts at the southeast corner of Central Park at 59th Street, Some landmarks to note: FAO Schwarz. at no. 767 (58th St.), the city's best tov emporium: Tiffany & Co., at no. 727 (btwn 56th & 57th sts.), with its stainless-steel doors and Atlas clock; gilded Trump Tower, at no. 725 (56th St.), with a seven-story waterfall and pinkish granite walls; Henri Bendel, at no. 712 (btwn 55th & 56th sts.), the city's most whimsical department store; and Takashimaya, at no. 693 (btwn 54th & 55th sts.), a branch of Japan's popular department store. Subway: N/R/W to Fifth Ave./59th St.

3 \*\*\* Museum of Modern Art. MoMA boasts the world's greatest collection of painting and sculpture from the late 19th century to the present, including everything from Monet's Water Lilies and Klimt's The Kiss to later masterworks by Frida Kahlo, Edward Hopper, Andy Warhol, and Jasper Johns. Add to that a vast collection of modern drawings, photos, architectural models and modern furniture, iconic design objects ranging from tableware to sports cars, and film and



The Museum of Modern Art.

video. A massive 3-year, \$650-million renovation project—under the guidance of Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi—was completed in 2004. It's twice as big, and, many critics contend, better. Paul Goldberger, writing in The New Yorker, said "The old building looks better than it has in half a century, both inside and out. @ 2 hr. 11 W. 53rd St. (btwn Fifth & Sixth aves.). 22 212/708-9400. www.moma.org. Admission \$20 adults, \$16 seniors, \$12 students, kids 16 & under free when accompanied by an adult. Sat-Mon & Wed-Thurs 10:30am-5:30pm; Fri 10:30am-8pm. Subway: E/V to Fifth Ave./53rd St.: B/D/F to 47th-50th sts.

Café 2. On the second floor of the new MoMA, a cafeteria-style restaurant has Italian-inspired offerings. Rest your feet and enjoy pastas, panini, pizza, salads, and soups. \$-\$\$.



The Rockefeller Center skating rink is open mid-October to mid-March.

#### ★★ Radio City Music Hall.

Designed by Donald Deskey and opened in 1932, this sumptuous Art Deco classic is the world's largest indoor theater, with 6,200 seats. Long known for its Rockettes revues and popular Christmas show, Radio City also has a stellar history as a venue for movie premieres, having opened more than 700 movies since 1933. Insider tip: The "powder rooms" are some of the swankiest in town, 1260 Sixth Ave. (at 50th St.). 212/247-4777. www.radiocity.com. 1-hr. Stage Door Tour is daily 11am to 3pm (extended hours Nov 15-Dec 30). Tickets \$17 adults, \$14 seniors, \$10 children under 12. Subway: B/D/F/V to 47th-50th sts/Rockefeller Center.

★★ Rockefeller Center. A prime example of the city's sky-scraper spirit and historic sense of optimism, Rock Center was built mainly in the 1930s. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1988, it's now the world's largest privately owned business-and-entertainment center, with 18 buildings on 21 acres. The GE Building, at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, is a 70-story showpiece towering over the plaza; walk through the granite-and-marble lobby lined with monumental murals by Spanish painter José Maria Sert

(1874–1945). The mammoth Rockefeller Christmas tree is traditionally placed in the plaza fronting 30 Rock. Bounded by 48th & 51th sts. & Fifth & Sixth aves. Subway: B/D/F/V to 47th–50th sts/Rockefeller Center.

## ★★ St. Patrick's Cathedral.

This Gothic white-marble-and-stone wonder is the largest Roman Catholic cathedral in the United States. Designed by James Renwick, begun in 1859, and consecrated in 1879, St. Patrick's wasn't completed until 1906. You can pop in between services to get a look at the impressive interior. The St. Michael and St. Louis altar came from Tiffany & Co. (also on Fifth Ave.), while the St. Elizabeth altar-honoring Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American-born saint—was designed by Paolo Medici of Rome. Fifth Ave. (btwn 50th & 51st sts.). 2 212/753-2261. www.nyarchdiocese.org/pastoral/cathedral about.html. Free admission. Sun-Fri 7am-8:30pm; Sat 8am-8:30pm. Subway: B/D/F/V to 47th-50th sts./ Rockefeller Center.

8 Saks Fifth Avenue. At this quintessential New York luxury

The door to St. Patrick's Cathedral.





Occasionally the library lions don construction or baseball hats.

retailer even the elaborate window displays are a treat. 611 Fifth Ave. (at 50th St.) 2212/753-4000. www.saks fifthavenue.com/. Subway: B/D/F/V to 47th–50th sts/Rockefeller Center.

## Mew York Public Library.

The lions Patience and Fortitude stand guard outside the grand Fifth Avenue entrance of the library. designed by Carrère & Hastings in 1911 and one of the country's finest examples of Beaux Arts architecture. Sadly, architect John Mervin Carrère never got to enjoy the fruits of his labor: he was killed in a taxi accident 2 months before the library dedication. The maiestic whitemarble structure is filled with Corinthian columns and allegorical statues. Special exhibits inside have run the gamut, from Imperial Russia to Newtonian Thought. Fifth Ave. (btwn 42nd & 40th sts.). 22 212/ 661-7220. www.nypl.org. Open Tues-Wed & Sat 11am-6pm; Thurs-Fri 10am-6pm, Sun 1pm-5pm, Subway: B/D/F/V to 42nd St

## ★★ Grand Central Terminal.

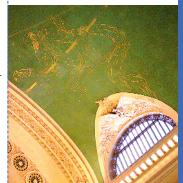
Another Beaux Arts beauty. The highlight is the vast, imposing main concourse, where high windows allow sunlight to pour onto the halfacre Tennessee-marble floor. Everything gleams, from the brass clock over the central kiosk to the goldand nickel-plated chandeliers piercing the side archways. The breathtaking sky ceiling depicts the constellations of the winter sky above New York. 42nd St. & Park Ave. 212/340-2210. www.grand centralterminal.com. Subway: 4/5/6/7/S to 42nd St.

#### ★ Grand Central food court.

I know people who go way out of their way to eat on the lower level at Grand Central. From hearty Mexican (Zocalo) to Creole (Jacques-Imo's) to top-notch soup (Hale & Hearty), Indian (Spice), and pizza (Two Boots), the choices are extensive and quick, and the seating plentiful. \$-\$\$.

12 ★★ Chrysler Building. Built as the Chrysler Corporation headquarters in 1930, this local favorite is New York's most romantic Art Deco masterpiece. It's especially dramatic at night, when the lights in its triangular openings play off its steely crown. And don't overlook the gargoyles

The sky ceiling at Grand Central.





The Chrysler's Building's gargoyles resemble hood ornaments on a car.

reaching out from the upper floors. 405 Lexington Ave. (btwn 42nd & 43rd sts.). Subway: 4/5/6 to Grand Central.

⊕ ★★ Empire State Building. King Kong climbed it in 1933. A plane slammed into it in 1945. After September 11, 2001, the Empire State regained its status as New York City's tallest building. Through it all, it has remained one of the city's favorite landmarks. Completed in 1931, the limestone-and-stainless steel Art Deco dazzler climbs 103 stories (1,454 ft.). The best views are from the 86th- and 102nd-floor observatories, but I prefer the former, from which you can walk onto an outer windswept deck. From here the citywide panorama is magnificent. 1 hr. 350 Fifth Ave. (at 34th St.). 22 212/736-3100. www. esbnyc.com. Observatory admission \$10 adults, \$9 seniors & children 12-17, \$5 children 6-11, free for children under 6. Buy & print tickets in advance online to avoid lines. Mon-Fri 10am-midnight; Sat-Sun 9:30am-midnight; tickets sold until 11:25pm. Subway: 6 to 33rd St.; B/D/F/V to 34th St.

★★ Union Square Greenmarket. The farm comes to the city at Manhattan's largest greenmarket. You'll find fresh produce from upstate and New Jersey farms, just-off-the-boat fish from Long Island, artisanal cheeses and homecured meats, plants, and organic herbs and spices. I've seen celebrated chefs arrive here with wheelbarrows in tow. In Union Square.
212/477-3220. www.cenyc.org. Open year-round Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat during daylight hours. Subway: 4/5/6/N/Q/R/W to Union Square.

★★ Rubin Museum of Art. New York must have some good karma: In October 2004 it scored this stunning collection of Himalayan art. In the former Chelsea outpost of Barneys, the Rubin Museum features sculptures, paintings, and textiles. 90 min. 150 W. 17th St. (btwn) Sixth & Seventh aves.). 22 212/620-5000. www.rmanyc.org. Admission \$7 adults, \$5 seniors & students, free for children under 12. Tues & Sat 11am-7pm; Thurs-Fri 11am-9pm; Wed, Sun, & public holidays 11am-5pm; closed Jan 1, Thanksgiving, & Dec 25. Subway: 1/9 to 18th St. •

The Empire State Building.

