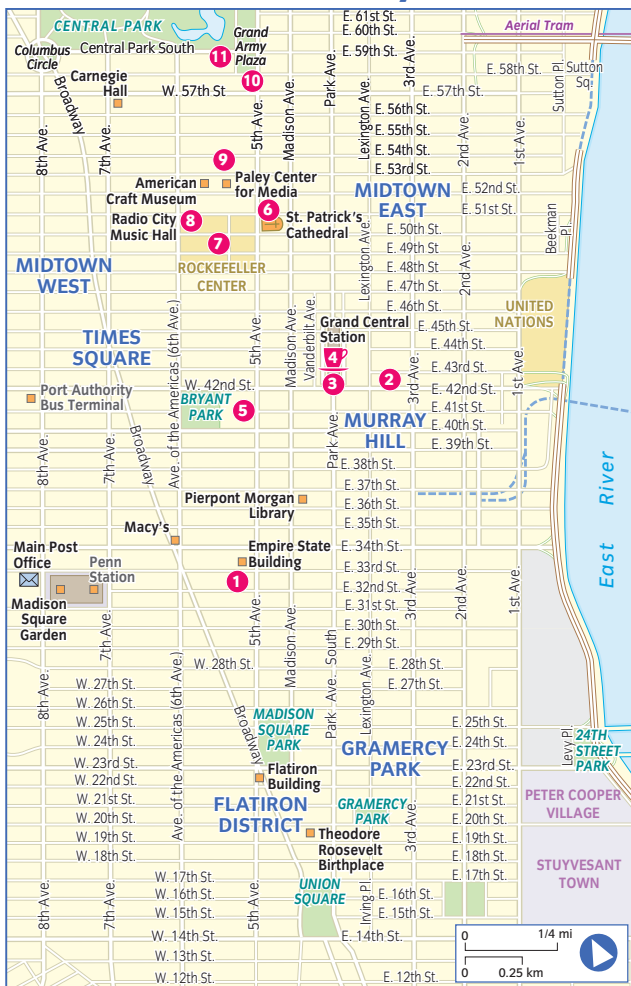


1

The Best **Full-Day** **Tours**



The Best in One Day



- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ① Empire State Building | ⑦ Rockefeller Center |
| ② Chrysler Building | ⑧ Radio City Music Hall |
| ③ Grand Central Terminal | ⑨ Museum of Modern Art |
| ④ Grand Central Food Court | ⑩ Fifth Avenue |
| ⑤ New York Public Library | ⑪ The Plaza |
| ⑥ St. Patrick's Cathedral | |

Previous page: The Sky Ceiling at Grand Central Station.

The most wonderful—and maddening—thing about New York? The endless number of choices. Start your urban exploration in midtown, the city's business and commercial heart. Yes, the shopping opportunities here are legion, and the air space is dotted with corporate skyscrapers—but midtown is also home to several quintessential New York landmarks. **START: Subway 6 to 33rd Street or B, D, F, or M to 34th Street.**

1 ★★ 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./436m). The best views are from the 86th- and 102nd-floor observatories, but we prefer the former, from which you can walk onto an outer windswept deck. From here the citywide panorama is electric. Lines can be long on week-ends. 🕒 **2 hr.** **350 Fifth Ave. (at 34th St.).** 📞 212/736-3100. www.esbnyc.com. *Observatory admission (86th floor) \$20 adults, \$18 seniors & children 12–17, \$14 children 6–11, free for children 5 and under. ESB Express pass: \$45. 102nd floor observatory: \$15 extra. Observatories open daily 8am–2am; last elevator goes up at 1:15am. Subway: 6 to 33rd St.; B/D/F/M to 34th St.*

2 ★★★ Chrysler Building. Built as the Chrysler Corporation headquarters in 1930, this is New York's most romantic Art Deco masterpiece and, for many New Yorkers, its most endearing visual touchstone. It's especially dramatic at night, when the triangular points in its steely crown glitter and sparkle. The marble-clad lobby is a hymn to Art Deco; a mural on the ceiling was actually rediscovered in 1999. *See p 39.*

3 ★★ Grand Central Terminal.

Another Beaux Arts beauty. The highlight is the vast, imposing main concourse, where high windows allow sunlight to pour onto the half-acre (.25-hectare) Tennessee-marble floor. Everything gleams, from the brass clock over the central kiosk to the gold- and 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.grandcentralterminal.com. *Subway: 4/5/6/7/S to 42nd St.*

Gargoyles perched high on the Chrysler Building.



4 ★ Grand Central Food Court.

We're at Grand Central already, so head down to the lower-level food court. From hearty Mexican (**Zócalo**) to top-notch soup (**Hale & Hearty**), Indian (**Spice**), pizza (**Two Boots**), and, of course, seafood at the famous **Oyster Bar**, the choices are delicious and fast, and the seating plentiful. \$-\$\$.

5 ★ New York Public Library.

The lions *Patience* and *Fortitude* stand guard outside the grand Fifth Avenue entrance of the **Main Branch (Stephen A. Schwarzman Building)** of the public library, designed by Carrère & Hastings in 1911. It's 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 majestic white-marble structure is filled with Corinthian columns and allegorical statues. The real Winnie the Pooh stuffed bear is on display in the library's Children's Center. 🕒 1 hr. Fifth Ave. (btw. 42nd & 40th sts.). ☎ 917/275-6975. www.nypl.org. Free admission. Open Mon & Thurs–Sat 10am–6pm; Tues–Wed 10am–8pm, Sun 1–5pm. Subway: B/D/F/M to 42nd St.

6 ★★ St. Patrick's Cathedral.

This Gothic white-marble-and-stone wonder is the largest Roman Catholic cathedral in the U.S. 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., while the St. Elizabeth altar—honoring Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American-born saint—was designed by Paolo Medici of Rome.

🕒 15 min. Fifth Ave. (btw. 50th & 51st sts.). ☎ 212/753-2261. www.saintpatrickscathedral.org. Free admission. Daily 6:30am–8:45pm. Subway: B/D/F/M to 47th–50th sts./Rockefeller Center.

7 ★★★ Rockefeller Center. A prime example of civic optimism expressed in soaring architecture, Rock Center was built 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**, also known as **30 Rock**, at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, is a 70-story showpiece; walk through the granite-and-marble lobby lined with handsome murals by Spanish painter José María Sert (1874–1945). The mammoth Rockefeller Christmas tree is placed in the plaza fronting 30 Rock, overlooking the famous skating rink. *Bounded by 48th & 51th sts. & Fifth & Sixth aves.* Subway: B/D/F/M to 47th–50th sts./Rockefeller Center.

8 ★★★ 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 6,000 seats. Long known for its Rockettes revues

Marble lions guard the New York Public Library.





The Palm Court at the Plaza.

and popular Christmas show, Radio City also has a stellar history as a venue for movie premieres. (More than 700 films have opened here since 1933.) The Deco “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** daily 11am–3pm (extended hours Nov 15–Dec 30). Tickets \$23 adults, \$18 seniors, \$16 children 12 & under. Subway: B/D/F/M to 47th–50th sts./Rockefeller Center.

9 ★★★ Museum of Modern Art. MoMA houses the world's greatest collection of painting and sculpture from the late 19th century to the present—from Monet's *Water Lilies* and Klimt's *The Kiss* to 20th-century masterworks by Frida Kahlo and Jasper Johns to contemporary pieces by Richard Serra and Chuck Close. 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 video. ⌚ 3 hr. See p 56.

10 ★★ Fifth Avenue. New York's most famous 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 top toy emporium; **Tiffany & Co.**, at no. 727 (btw. 56th & 57th sts.), with its stainless-steel doors and Atlas clock; gilded **Trump Tower**, at no. 725 (56th St.), with a seven-story waterfall; **Henri Bendel**, at no. 712 (btw. 55th & 56th sts.), a whimsical department store with vintage Lalique art-glass windows; and at 754 (at 57th St.) **Bergdorf Goodman**. Subway: N/R/W to Fifth Ave./59th St.

11 ★ The Plaza. There's no denying the glamour of the Big Apple's most famous hotel (which is divided between hotel rooms and private condos, with restaurants and shops on the ground floor). This 1907 landmark French Renaissance palace has hosted royalty, celebrities, and a legion of honeymooners. Have afternoon tea in the legendary **Palm Court** or sip a cup of coffee in the **Champagne Bar**. **768 Fifth Ave. (at Central Park South).** ☎ **888/850-0909.** www.fairmont.com/theplaza. Subway: N/R/W to Fifth Ave./59th St.

The Best in Two Days



- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Metropolitan Museum of Art | 8 American Museum of Natural History |
| 2 The Met | 9 AMNH |
| 3 Central Park | 10 Rose Center for Earth & Space |
| 4 The Obelisk | 11 The Dakota |
| 5 Belvedere Castle | 12 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts |
| 6 Shakespeare Garden | 13 Shun Lee West/Shun Lee Cafe |
| 7 The Lake | |

Uptown is Manhattan's artistic soul, the home of the **Metropolitan Museum and Lincoln Center**. It's also home to Central Park, an urban oasis that recharges body and mind. This part of town has a wealth of museums—most of them along Fifth Avenue. To avoid burnout, don't try to see them all in 1 day. If you have kids in tow, run, don't walk, to the American Museum of Natural History. **START: Subway 4, 5, or 6 to 86th Street.**

1 ★★★ kids Metropolitan Museum of Art. At 177,777 square yards (148,644 sq. m), 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 20th-century decorative arts—and masterpieces are the rule. You could go once a week for a lifetime and still find something new on each visit. Everyone should see the **Temple of Dendur**, the jewel of the Egyptian collection. But let personal preference be your guide to the rest. Touchstones include the exceptional Rembrandts, Vermeers, and other Dutch master painters. The transplanted period rooms—from the elegant 18th-century bedroom from a

Venetian castle to the warm and inviting 20th-century Frank Lloyd Wright living room—are equally unmissable. 🕒 **3 hr.** See p 46.

2 The Met. Eating at the Met gives you options: If you're visiting between May and October, check out the **Roof Garden Café** (\$) for breathtaking treetop views of Central Park. Year-round you can grab lunch at the ground-floor **cafeteria** (\$), the **American Wing Café** (\$\$), or at the elegant **Petrie Court Café & Wine Bar** (\$\$), which overlooks Central Park. On Friday and Saturday evenings, cocktails and appetizers are served at the **Great Hall Balcony Bar** (\$) overlooking the Great Hall. *The Met, Fifth Ave. (at 82nd St.).* 📞 212/535-7710. www.metmuseum.org.

The Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



3 ★★★ kids Central Park. Manhattanites may lack 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 (4km) long (extending from 59th to 110th sts.) and a half-mile (.8km) wide (from Fifth Ave. to Central Park West). It encompasses a zoo, a carousel, two ice-skating rinks, restaurants, children's playgrounds, even theaters. *See p 104.*

4 The Obelisk. Also called Cleopatra's Needle, this 71-foot (21m) obelisk is reached by following the path leading west behind the Met. Originally erected in Heliopolis, Egypt, around 1475 B.C., it was given to New York by the khedive of Egypt in 1880. Continue on the path to Central Park's **Great Lawn** (p 105), site of countless softball games, concerts, and peaceful political protests.

The T. Rex at the American Museum of Natural History.



5 ★ Belvedere Castle. Built by Calvert Vaux in 1869, this fanciful medieval-style fortress-in-miniature sits at the highest point in Central Park and affords 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, this garden grows only those flowers and plants mentioned in the Bard's plays.

7 ★★ The Lake. South of the garden, you'll cross the 79th Street Transverse Road to reach the Lake, with its perimeter pathway lined with weeping willows and Japanese cherry trees. The neo-Victorian Loeb Boathouse (p 106) 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. *See p 21 and p 106.*

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 find 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 specimens, ranging from microscopic 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 floor. 🕒 **2 hr.** *See p 54.*

9 kids AMNH. The AMNH has a wide selection of food choices, starting with the **Food Court** (\$), which has a kid-friendly selection of pizzas, hot entrees, sandwiches—even sushi rolls. **Café on One** (\$) has adult-friendly paninis, salads, and latés. The **Starlight Café** (\$) features wraps, sandwiches, chicken nuggets, hot dogs, and fruit cups or fresh-baked cookies. *American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West (btw. 77th & 81st sts.).* ☎ 212/769-5100. www.amnh.org.

10 ★★ kids Rose Center for Earth & Space. Attached to the American Museum of Natural History, this four-story sphere “floating” in a glass square is astonishing. Even if you’re suffering from museum overload, the Rose Center will lift your spirits. The center’s **Hayden Planetarium** features spectacular space shows (every half-hour 10:30am–4:30pm Mon–Fri, from 11am Wed; 10:30am–5pm Sat). *See p 55.*

11 The Dakota. With its dark trim and dramatic gables, dormers, and oriel windows, this 1884 apartment house is one of the city’s most 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.*

12 ★★ Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. New York has countless performing arts venues, but none so multifaceted as Lincoln Center—presenting world-class opera, ballet, dramatic theater, jazz, symphonies, and more. After a long day on your feet, relax on the outdoor plaza in front of the fountains.



The dome of the Hayden Planetarium at the Rose Center for Earth & Space.

At Christmas the light displays are lovely, and on summer evenings the plaza becomes an outdoor dance party. *See p 143.*

13 Shun Lee West/Shun Lee Café. This “haute Chinese” restaurant is a special place to dine before or after a performance at Lincoln Center. Enjoy expertly prepared Chinese dishes in a theatrically lighted space sheathed in black lacquer. Grand Marnier prawns are rich and decadent; the Heavenly Sea Bass Filet is cooked in a rice wine sauce. Shun Lee’s more casual and less expensive cafe counterpart just next door serves dim sum. *43 W. 65th St. (btw. Columbus Ave. & Central Park West).* ☎ 212/769-3888. www.shunleewest.com. \$\$–\$\$\$.

The Best in Three Days



Explore the city's beginnings, its turbulent recent history, and its dynamic present in **Lower Manhattan**. You'll find Dutch influences and cobblestoned streets, a center of city government and world finance, the beautiful waterfront Battery Park looking over the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, as well as a neighborhood that still bears the scars of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. (Don't miss the new memorial at the World Trade Center site.) **Note:** We recommend you start this tour early and book both the memorial and Lady Liberty in advance. For more details on southern Manhattan, see p 61. **START:** Subway 4, 5, or 6 to Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall.

1 Blue Spoon Coffee Co. Kick off your day with a pick-me-up at this favorite of City Hall workers. They serve Intelligentsia brand coffee and tea, H&H bagels, Balthazar breads, plus panini, muffins, and more. **76 Chambers St. (btw. Broadway & Church).** ☎ 212/619-7230. <http://bluespooncoffee.com>. \$.

2 ★ Foley Square. It's hard to believe that this dignified urban landscape was once a fetid swamp and, in the 19th century, one of the city's most notorious slums, Five Points. Today, with its ring of colonnaded courthouse buildings, Foley Square bustles with judiciary industry. It's also one of the most filmed places in the five boroughs. The long-running (though now-cancelled) TV series **Law & Order** and its still-running spinoffs beat a path up and down the courthouse steps. The exterior of the 1913 **NY State Supreme Court Building** (60 Centre St.) is where Kris Kringle goes on trial in *Miracle on 34th Street* (the original). The imposing 1932 **Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse** (40 Centre St.) was designed by Cass Gilbert. **Bounded by Centre, Worth & Lafayette sts. Subway: 4/5/6 to Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall.**

3 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 St.), built on the other side of Centre Street in 1915 by McKim, Mead & 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 from the proceeds 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 (btw. Broadway & Park Row).**

4 ★★ 9/11 Memorial Preview Site. The Twin Towers dominated the city's skyline after their construction in 1973, and visitors from around the world have made pilgrimages to this site since their destruction during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. After a decade of development, you can finally visit the footprints of the towers, now a permanent memorial,



Construction on One World Trade Center.

Reflecting Absence (see below). But first you'll need tickets for *Reflecting Absence*, which you can get here at this preview site and minimuseum. (The official National September 11 Memorial & Museum opens Sept 2012.) 🕒 30 min. 20 Vesey St. ☎ 212/ 267-2047. www.911memorial.org. Mon–Sat 10am–7pm; Sun 10am–6pm. Subway A/C to World Trade Center; N/R to Cortland St.

5 ★★ **St. Paul's Chapel.** If there's a wait for tickets to *Reflecting Absence* at the preview site, this is a good time to stop into nearby St. Paul's, Manhattan's only surviving pre-Revolutionary church from 1766. Built to resemble London's St. Martin-in-the-Fields, with a light, elegant Georgian interior, the chapel was a refuge for rescue workers after September 11. It is at St. Paul's that the story of 9/11 is most vividly on display, with artifacts, impromptu altars, and donations from around the world. The pastoral churchyard in back is filled with 18th- and 19th-century tombstones. 🕒 25 min. 209 Broadway (at Fulton St.). ☎ 212/ 233-4164. www.saintpaulschapel.org. Mon–Fri 10am–6pm; Sat 10am–4pm; Sun 7am–3pm. Subway: 2/3 to Park Place; 1/9/4/5/A to Fulton St./ Broadway/Nassau.

6 ★★★ **Reflecting Absence.**

This permanent memorial was designed by Michael Arad and Peter Walker and converts the footprints of the Twin Towers into large reflective pools, incorporating the largest manmade waterfalls in North America. A directory of names of 9/11 victims (inscribed around the pools) is available at www.911memorial.org or through the site's free "Explore 9/11" iPhone app. Once at the memorial, you'll be surrounded by the bustling construction of Daniel Libeskind's 1,776-foot-tall (533m) **Freedom Tower** and the site's four other new buildings. A winglike steel and glass canopy, designed by Catalan architect Santiago Calatrava, will shelter the nearby World Trade Center transportation hub and PATH station. Construction work is ongoing and is expected to last till 2014.

🕒 90 min. www.911memorial.org. Daily, hours subject to change. Subway: A/C to World Trade Center; N/R to Cortland St.

7 **Tribute WTC Visitor Center.**

This center at the WTC site's south border was created by the nonprofit September 11th Families' Association. It offers daily walking tours (\$10), led by people whose lives were affected by the disaster. 90

Liberty St. ☎ 212/393-9160. www.tributewtc.org. Subway: A/C to World Trade Center; N/R to Cortland St.

8 ★★ Trinity Church. This lovely 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. Among those buried in the pretty churchyard are Alexander Hamilton and Robert Fulton. ⌚ 25 min. Broadway (at Wall St.). ☎ 212/602-0800. www.trinitywallstreet.org. Mon–Fri 7am–6pm; Sat 8am–4pm; Sun 7am–4pm. Subway: 4/5 to Wall St.

9 ★ Adrienne's Pizzabar. The narrow historic Stone Street (p 37) is lined with cafes, taverns, and restaurants. In summer the street is closed to traffic and tables are set out on the cobblestones. You might try Adrienne's, which serves thin-crust square pizza. 54 Stone St. (btw. William & Pearl sts.). ☎ 212/248-3838. \$–\$\$.

10 ★★ Battery Park. Stroll the landscaped park and riverside walkway for sweeping views of New York Harbor, the Statue of Liberty, and the Verrazano Bridge. It's a breezy,

scenic spot to appreciate the scope of the mighty harbor—the engine behind the city's monumental growth ever since Henry Hudson and his wooden sailing ship rode the blue swells to shore. The park's centerpiece is the damaged 22-ton bronze sphere that once stood in the World Trade Center plaza. **From State St. to New York Harbor.**

☎ 212/344-3496. www.thebattery.org. Free admission. 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. **Note:** Save yourself a potentially 3-hour wait and buy and print tickets ahead of time. Tickets sell out daily by noon. Also note that interior access to the Statue of Liberty will be restricted for security upgrades until late 2012; you can still visit Liberty Island, but the base and pedestal will be closed, and the crown and torch are permanently off-limits. Visitors can explore the Statue of Liberty Museum, peer into the inner structure through a glass ceiling near the base of the statue, and

Trinity Church's cemetery, where founding father Alexander Hamilton is buried.



enjoy views from the observation deck instead. **Tip:** The Staten Island Ferry (www.siferry.com), a free 25-minute trip—not to be confused with the official Statue Cruises, which dock at Liberty and Ellis islands—provides spectacular skyline views of Manhattan and is a wonderful way to see the harbor. You'll pass by (though not stop at) Lady Liberty and Ellis Island. 🕒 1 hr. (Statue Cruise ferry: 15 min.). On Liberty Island in New York Harbor. 📞 212/363-3200 (general info) or 877/523-9849 (tickets). www.nps.gov/stli or www.statuecruises.com. Ticket to Liberty & Ellis islands \$12 adults, \$10 seniors, \$5 children 4–12. Daily 9am–4pm (last ferry departs around 3pm); extended hours in summer. Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

12 ★★ ★ **kids Ellis Island Immigration Museum.** For 62 years (1892–1954), this was the main point of entry for newcomers to America. Today it's one of New York's most moving attractions—particularly for the 40% of Americans whose ancestors passed through the immigration center here. It skillfully describes coming to America through the eyes

of the immigrants. Among the points of interest: the **Wall of Honor**, which commemorates more than 500,000 immigrants and their families; the **American Family Immigration History Center**, where interactive exhibits can help you research your own family history; and the award-winning documentary *Island of Hope, Island of Tears*. 🕒 2 hr. (Statue Cruise ferry: 10 min. from Liberty Island). 📞 212/363-3200. www.nps.gov/elis or www.ellisland.org. For tickets, see Statue of Liberty, above. Daily 9:30–5pm (extended hours in summer). Subway: 4/5 to Bowling Green; 1/9 to South Ferry.

13 ★ **2 WEST & Rise Bar.** Finish your tour with a cocktail and a bite to eat in the warm, elegant 2 WEST restaurant/lounge inside the Ritz-Carlton Battery Park and just across the street from the Museum of Jewish Heritage (p 53). Or spring for the restaurant's popular Sunday brunch buffet (\$60). If the weather's nice, the rooftop Rise Bar is a good alternative. 2 West St. 📞 212/248-3838. www.ritzcarlton.com. \$\$\$.

The Statue of Liberty.

