

New York

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NEW YORK

The Motto: Excelsior (Ever Upward!)

(These impressions have been sent to us by one of our Swiss readers in Devonshire.)

Have you seen in the newspapers that there are great reductions in air fares to New York? In the book "New York on Five Dollars a Day" you can choose what you wish to see and where to stay. Many wonderful sights are free, and one could go around and have a grand time full of interest in every way, spending very little. The art lover could not see it all in a year!

Nearly all non-Americans think New York means the City of New York and forget that the State of New York with Albany as its capital is as big as England. Manhattan alone has three million inhabitants, and with the boroughs Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and Richmond over eight million.

In 1626 Manhattan Island was bought by Dutch Peter Minuit, from the Carnarsie Indians, for trinkets worth 60 Dutch guilders (about 24 dollars); today it is assessed at 19,000,000,000 dollars!

New York is the wonder city of the world; it is tremendous, terrific, and has everything! During the big annual Summer Festival, it is bursting with exciting things to do and see. You can stay in beautiful hotels, dine in the best restaurants, see shows and movies (all in air-conditioned buildings). Concerts in Parks and Museums are free! You can go sight-seeing to your heart's content; there is so much to do and see, you will certainly find what you are looking for.

Manhattan is 22 miles long and for a 15-cent bus ticket (1/-) you can ride from one end to the other. By the Sub-way (Underground) you can go from the city to the end of any of the boroughs for 15 cents.

One can get an excellent cup of coffee for 10 cents (8d.) beautiful peaches (2-lbs. for 29 cents), a huge slice of water-melon (a real meal in itself), and wonderful ripe mangoes, each from 25 cents. This is the cheapest you can get in New York but it depends very much where you buy.

£25 (68 dollars) a week is reasonable for New York. You can do it at £12.10s. a week, or you could easily spend 50 dollars a day! In the Playroom Restaurant at Hotel Manhattan, dinner for three costs over 24 dollars — without wine! There are hotels with TV in air-conditioned bedrooms and colour TV in the lounge. With British basic allowance one could not stay long in luxury hotels such as the famous Waldorf-Astoria or Ritz-Tower in Park Avenue. The cheapest way is to have your own apartment (leave out the Night Clubs!) and do your own shopping, as there is no tax on groceries. The self-service and chain stores are wonderful; you can choose and have what you really want. Manhattan has over 20,000 restaurants; at "Choc Full O' Nuts" you can get a nice meal at 75 cents, instantly served. The self-service restaurants are also reasonable, but everywhere else they charge 15% for service.

It is most interesting to look round between the 32nd and 59th Streets, and enjoy a rest at the marvellous Rockefeller Plaza. The main avenues go from south to north and the cross roads are numbered. Fifth Avenue is the dividing line between East and West Manhattan. It became world-famous through its exclusive shops and impressive sky-scrapers. The famous Broadway is 18 miles long; around Times Square is theatreland — cinema on cinema, theatres and restaurants. In this theatre section of the city, along Broadway and on its cross streets, are

most of the leading theatres and cinemas, and in addition gay shops abound. The brilliant illuminations here at night make this the "Great White Way".

Manhattan has more sky-scrapers than anywhere else in the world. The first one, the Flatiron Building with twenty-one stories at the 32nd Street, Fifth Avenue, was built in 1902. In 1913 the Woolworth Building with sixty floors was the tallest sky-scraper in the world. As the island is all one hard solid rock, it is safe for immense sky-scrapers. Now the Empire State Building has beaten them all and is still the tallest one in the world, with 102 stories and two below street level. There is a balcony at the 86th floor and a smaller one at the 102nd. It is the eighth Wonder of the World! The multiple TV tower is 222 feet high; four powerful beacons added to the tower make it possible for the Empire State Building to be seen from hundreds of miles away. The sky-scrapers left a bigger impression on me than I ever expected, and I visited many. The Lever Brothers Buildings and Seagram House are especially beautiful examples of modern business architecture, with gleaming glass walls laced with shining steel and bronze.

The United Nations sky-scraper has thirty-nine stories. The General Assembly accepted an 8,500,000-dollar gift from J. D. Rockefeller Junr. to purchase land for a permanent headquarters. The late hunting-ground of the Algonquin Indians, and recently six blocks (eighteen acres) of New York's crowded Manhattan, are now owned by the people of the world; over eighty nations have their flags swinging gaily. There are conducted tours, at 1.50 dollars, over the beautiful Assembly Hall. On the ground floor are a restaurant, gift shops, and a post-office. A walk in the magnificent park along the River Hudson is free; one can sit there for hours watching people from all over the world, the ships, aeroplanes, and helicopters — a great picture of a great city.

Arriving by sea one is greeted by the largest Lady in the world — the Statue of Liberty — on Bedloe's Island. This was given by the French as a symbol of friendship and is the nation's best-known work of art. "Liberty Enlightening the World" stands on a 142-foot pedestal; the 225-ton statue is made of hand-hammered copper plates supported on an inner iron frame. The view from windows just under the spiked crown is extraordinary, but the view from the balcony under the torch held in the right hand is no longer available. Most interesting is the three-hour boat ride round Manhattan seeing the greatest harbour in the world and New York's Naval Shipyard, where many famous naval vessels have been built. This unforgettable cruise is America's favourite boat-ride.

The wonderful Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. Patrick has outstanding Gothic architecture, and the beautiful stained-glass windows rank with the best in the world. Most notable is the great rose window, sixteen feet in diameter, over the main entrance. The marble pulpit and high altar are unusually fine. Of the sung masses my first impressions were exquisite and unforgettable.

Rockefeller Centre — 48th to 51st Street — has fifteen buildings on twelve acres. There are ten seasonal floral displays on view in the promenade from Fifth Avenue to Lower Plaza, dominated by Prometheus Fountain. To see this for the first time, with the R.C.A. Building with seventy stories in the background, is breath-taking. The more I saw it, the more I loved it. The Plaza is transformed from two outdoor restaurants in summer to an ice rink in winter, with a huge Christmas Tree and a fairylike display.