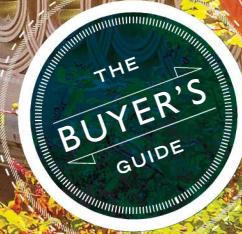


DISCOVERING WRIGHT SITES | ALASKAN ART | MANSIONS OF GLORY

GROUP THE TRAVEL LEADER

A *fresh look* AT
NEW YORK

ARTS &
CULTURE
ISSUE
SEPTEMBER
2014





take on

A NEW NEW YORK

97 Orchard Street
Built in 1863-64 by Lucas Glockner, a German-born ta
Street is typical of the earliest form of tenement houses in
New York. For millions of immigrants from scores of
tenement and others like it was a place of first settlement.
We salute them as our urban pioneers on the municip
This is the first tenement to be individually listed on the
National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the
September, 1992



NEW WALKING TOURS TAKE GROUPS THROUGH THE NEW YORK STOMPING GROUNDS OF CELEBRITY CHEF MARIO BATALI.

Courtesy Walks of New York

EVEN YOUR NYC VETERANS WILL ENJOY THESE OPTIONS

BY GABI LOGAN

New York City is a notoriously difficult nut to crack. It's easy to visit it and get swept up in its energy, but how do you get under the surface? See New York like a New Yorker? Have a truly exclusive New York experience?

Although a wealth of tours offer ways to see the various sides of New York, only a handful allow the uninitiated visitor into some of the city's most high security, rarefied spaces, like the private presidential train station hidden in Grand Central Terminal's most secret subbasement.

A SECRET TERMINAL

The secrets of Grand Central Terminal, the world's largest train station, which recently celebrated its 100th birthday, unfold in two in-depth tours from the Metro-North Railroad and the Municipal Art Society (MSA). As the sixth most-visited attraction in the world, according to a study by Travel + Leisure based on government tourism figures and industry reports, a crowd equivalent to the population of San Francisco passes through the station each day now. But that was not always the case.

"In the 1960s, when we received landmark designation, the building was saved, but it looked worse than crap," said Daniel Brucker, the energetic docent-in-chief tasked with shepherding inquisitive VIPs through Grand Central's secrets. "Homeless people — around 1,000 a day — crowded the floors, and it looked like a Civil War battlefield."

Both tours explore Grand Central's elegant history, which includes pioneering the term "rolling out the red carpet" due to the red carpet used to welcome guests who arrived on luxury long-distance trains. Tour guides tell how the station was returned to glory with the help of crusading New Yorkers, including Jacqueline

Kennedy Onassis, who pushed the railroad to raise money to clean up the station.

The Metro-North tour explores spaces not open to the public, such as the upper glass walkways and lower levels. Depending on the length of the tour and availability, Brucker will show or tell about the typically off-limits areas, such as the transformer room that Nazi spies tried to infiltrate to sabotage the U.S. war machine during World War II and the private train station built for President Franklin Roosevelt that is still used by the president as emergency egress during his stays in New York.

MSA tours run daily at 12:30 p.m. and are led by volunteer docents trained in the history of the station and in art history. The Metro-North employee tours can be booked by private groups and begin at \$1,000, depending on the size of the group and the scope of the tour.

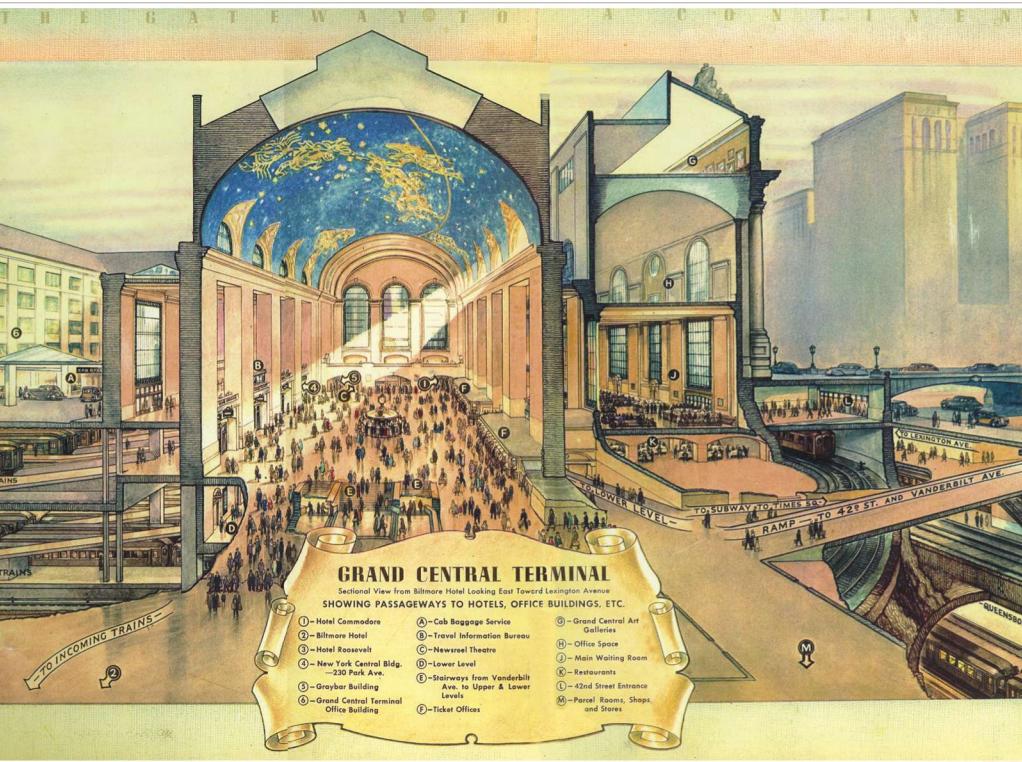
STAGE DOOR TOUR

Though the building has remained virtually unchanged since 1932 — even the hydraulics powering the stage elevators are original — the Radio City interactive stage door tour offers a different experience for each visit and for each group, depending on the daily activities in the music hall.

On every tour, groups have the opportunity to meet a Rockette and either view the current stage setup, such as the enormous set now installed for "America's Got Talent," or watch part of the current performance from the private viewing booth.

Performers from Frank Sinatra to Ray Charles and 98 Degrees to Celine Dion have graced the halls over the years, so in addition to meeting one of the Rockettes, who perform 210 shows during the Christmas season alone, you never know who will be onstage or pass you in the halls during your visit.

A new VIP add-on to the standard interac-



Courtesy MSANYC

HISTORIC TOURS AT GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL GIVE GROUPS AN INSIDE LOOK AT SOME OF THE STATION'S MOST NOTABLE ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES.

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tive stage door tour adds access to spaces not typically included in the walk-through: the rehearsal halls, the dressing rooms or the private apartment of Radio City founder "Roxy" Rothafel. Spaces toured depend on availability at the time of the tour.

BATALI'S STOMPING GROUND

With his fresh take on Italian food, bringing the fundamentals of seasonality and ingredient-focused cooking into vogue in American cuisine, Mario Batali has been taking the New York City food scene by storm for decades. A brand-new tour beginning this month from Walks of New York in collaboration with Batali



I've had a lot of fun experiences on trips to New York over the years, but one of the most memorable came on a trip that my wife Laura and I made to the city last spring. We were in the area on business (to cover the launch of a new cruise ship), but took an extra day to explore the local food scene.

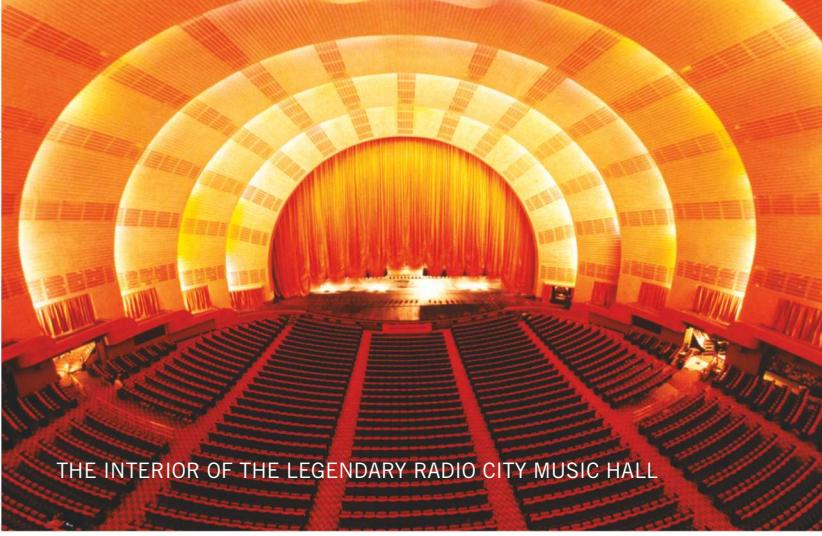
Laura and I are both food aficionados, and are avid fans of numerous Food Network television shows. We knew that many of our favorite TV chefs and food personalities had restaurants in New York, and so we set out to try as many of them as we could during our short time in the city.

Our culinary tour of New York started with lunch at Tacombi, an authentic Mexican taco stand owned by Aaron Sanchez and located in the charming No-lita neighborhood. We had dinner at Butter, an inventive fine-dining establishment run by celebrity chef Alex Guarnaschelli, and took advantage of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet chef Geoffrey Zakarian at the launch of his restaurant on board the Norwegian Breakaway.

At the end of the trip, we squeezed in some time to visit Eataly, an Italian market and restaurant complex opened by legendary chef Mario Batali. The pizza there, as you would expect, was delicious.

Our short time in New York only allowed us to visit a few of the restaurants we wanted to try. We're already developing a list of places to hit on our next trip.

— BY BRIAN JEWELL



THE INTERIOR OF THE LEGENDARY RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

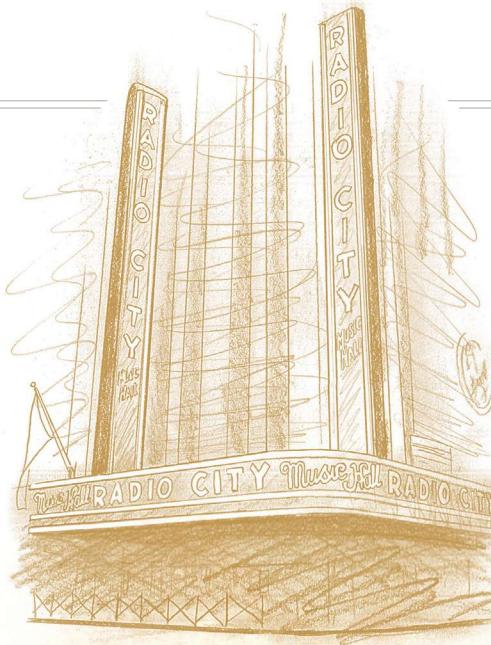
Courtesy MSG Entertainment

pulls back the curtain on Batali, his inspirations and his restaurants.

Structured like an Italian meal, the tour moves through Greenwich Village, the neighborhood that inspired Batali and nurtured and supported his vision, with stops for each course, from cheese and salami antipasti to dessert. As the tour moves through the Village, it stops at two of Batali's restaurants, Otto and Lupa, and visits neighborhood food purveyors and artisanal producers for kitchen tours and cooking tips and behind-the-scenes industry insights from staff.

Groups will enjoy an early lunch through tastings at both Batali restaurants and other venues during the approximately three-hour tour, and there is the opportunity to organize a dinner version for private groups upon request.

Due to space restrictions in the restaurants, the tour is conceived for smaller groups of up to 24, although tours can be run concurrently for larger groups.



Artwork by David Brown

ALL-ACCESS IN THE GARDEN

While you may not technically rub shoulders with New York's sports stars during this tour — although the hockey players have been known to throw up a puck or two if you catch them during their morning skate — Madison Square Garden's all-access tour is the next best thing. It sweeps you from one VIP space to the next through halls adorned with lifesize images of the great figures from sports, music and politics who have taken the stage through the Garden's 135 years.

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