

ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Muriel Bolger finds herself amazed at one of New York's greatest views, on Top of the Rock

TALK to anyone about what to do in New York and they'll tell you to go to Top of the Rock, the viewing decks on the top of the Rockefeller Center. I now can add my recommendations to those too. It is an experience not to be missed.

I found myself gazing in awe on a crisp clear day at the tapestry spreading on all sides from the viewing levels. Central Park and its reservoir, the Yankee stadium in the distance, the Art Deco Chrysler Building, Times Square, the Hudson River, the East River, the Brooklyn Bridge and the Statue of Liberty. It is, quite simply, the most spectacular view in New York City. However the whole experience starts before you ever get to these dizzying heights.

The entrance is bedecked with an amazing chandelier inspired by Swarovski, world leaders in cut crystal, and Target, a dynamic and innovative retailer in the US. This stunning crystal waterfall chandelier that is the centrepiece of the Rock's entrance on West 50th Street is called 'Joie'.

Swarovski features again on the first level of the observation deck with 'Radiance', a massive crystal geode wall. It shimmers with 600 custom glass and crystal panels

motion-detection technology, using the movements of the visitors as its catalyst. These seek you out silently and allocate a colour to each individual, and, as you walk around the Breezeway panels light up as they detect your presence and movements.

However, engaging and all as these features are, it's the Top of the Rock views you've come to see!

The observation deck was first opened to the public in 1933 and reopened to the public in 2005. There's a wonderful picture gallery cataloguing the building's history. It should have been the New York Opera House but the Wall Street Crash put paid to those plans. If you know the famous photographs of construction workers sitting, perched high above the city on a beam as the Rockefeller Centre was being constructed, then you too can relive their experiences. There's a beam over a glass floor, which recreates the feelings, and you can have your photo taken with that same New York backdrop.

The historic observation deck presents an incomparable place from which to understand and celebrate New York City. It spans three lower levels and three upper levels housed in the

the state-of-the-art reserved-time ticketing system. This is a convenient innovation, which means that visitors can purchase tickets online, reserving the date and time of the desired visit in advance. Of course tickets can be bought on site too.

Other Top of the Rock features worth mentioning are the sky shuttle elevators, where participants observe their own rapid acceleration through the top of the shaft; the indoor viewing area, and the transparent, safety glass panels which allow completely unobstructed open-air views encompassing some of the city's most prominent landmarks.

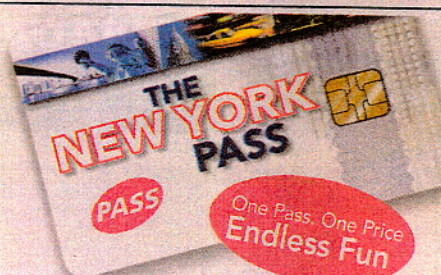
The Grand viewing decks on the 69th floor spread their vistas over Manhattan to the east, west, north and south, with visibility approximately 80 miles on clear days. The 70th floor, reachable by stairs or elevator, crowns the building, allowing visitors to experience a 360-degree panorama of New York City. Only 20 feet wide and nearly 200 feet long, the top level provides a vantage point unlike any other found in New York. By night it's a magical, twinkling marvel!

Top of the Rock is open daily from 8.30am to midnight, with the sky shuttle

its via the website www.topoftherocknyc.com or call 877-NYC-ROCK (877-692-7625) or 212-698-2000.

In addition, there are several terminals on-site to help visitors purchase tickets easily. The reserved-ticketing

system is designed to ensure the deck is easily accessible and the experience is always amazing.



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