What’s new in NYC

By Fred Michmershuizen, today Staff

If you come to the Greater New York Dental Meeting every single year, you might think that you have “been there, done that” when it comes to exploring New York City. Think again.

Gotham is constantly changing. From the skyline, which seems to get more interesting each week, to the latest Broadway and Off-Broadway shows, there is always something new and exciting to take in.

Whether this is your first time in the Big Apple or your 50th, here are some things you might want to check out this year.

The High Line

The High Line is one of New York City’s newest attractions. It’s a public park built on a renovated train line, elevated above the streets of the West Side of Manhattan. It first opened in 2009, with a second section added in 2011. The third and final section opened in September of this year, and – good news to GNYDM attendees – will be open to the public since September. You can access this public park from West 34th Street, just steps from the Javits Center. (Photo/ George Rowland, today Staff)

The museum is open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (last entry at 6 p.m.), and the memorial is accessible daily from 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. To plan a visit and get information on tickets to the museum, visit www.911memorial.org.

While you are in the area, you’ll also want to check out the new Freedom Tower, now called One World Trade Center, an office building that opened to its first tenants on Nov. 3. You can’t miss it; just look up from anywhere in the city. At 1,776 feet, it’s the tallest building in the United States.

Citi Bike

New York now has a bike share program, called Citi Bike. It’s hugely popular with the locals, and it’s also available to visitors. You’ll no doubt see these blue bikes being ridden all over the place, as well as docked at various street corners scattered throughout Manhattan below 60th Street and in parts of Brooklyn.

The system consists of a fleet of sturdy, adjustable bikes that are locked into a network of docking stations. The bikes can be checked out from and then returned to any station in the system. You get 30 minutes to complete your trip from Point A to Point B.

Don’t be shy. Buy a 24-hour access pass with a credit card at any station for $9.95. A seven-day pass is $25. You can get more information at each station’s touchscreen kiosk (there’s one just outside the Javits), along with a map of the service area and stations. The bikes can be checked out locked into a network of docking stations.

What not to do

New York City’s most famous Christmas tree is at Rockefeller Plaza, between West 48th and West 51st streets and Fifth and Sixth avenues. It will be lit for the first time on Wednesday. Don’t even think of attending the ceremony with live performances, taking place from 7 to 9 p.m. The area will be swarmed with literally tens of thousands of people just like you, dying to get a look.

If you absolutely must see the tree, pick another time, preferably an evening after the theater gets out. Or, have lunch at The Sea Grill — the seagrillnyc.com, (212) 332.7610 — and watch from your comfortable seat behind the glass (provided, of course, that you can get a table).

Important: If you venture into Times Square, stay away from Spider Man, Bat Man, Mickey Mouse, Wonder Woman, Elmo and anyone else dressed as a superhero or animated character. Their ruse is to get you to pose for a picture with them and then demand cash. Also stay away from bicycle cabs, whose drivers are notorious for demanding outrageous sums of money from unsuspecting out-of-towners.

Finally, those horse-drawn carriages you’ll see around Central Park have gotten a bad rap in the local media of late, mainly by animal rights activists who claim the horses are mistreated. Use your discretion.