Get out and explore 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. Well, 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 do during your stay.

Now this year: One World Observatory
You can now go to the top of One World Trade Center. At 1,776 feet, it’s the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere.

You’ll start by entering one of the most high-tech elevators you’ve ever been in. As you ascend, you’ll see a time-lapse LED representation of the city’s development over several hundred years, from the 1500s right up to the present day. Be sure to pay attention, though, as the trip to the top takes less than one minute.

Once you’re at the top, you’ll have the best view money can buy. Also at the top is the Sky Portal, described as “a 14-foot wide circular disc that delivers an unforgettable view, using real-time, high-definition footage of the streets below.”

One World Trade Center is downtown, at 285 Fulton St. The entrance to the public is at the corner of West and Vesey streets. If you intend to go up, it’s best to purchase tickets in advance, at oneworldobservatory.com. You can also call (844) 695-1776. It’s open daily from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Worth your time: 9/11 Memorial and Museum
Also at the World Trade Center site is the National September 11 Memorial Museum. It documents the events of 9/11, the impact of those events and the continuing significance. Artifacts associated with the terrorist attack are displayed, and stories of loss and recovery are presented.

Nearby is the 9/11 Memorial, consisting of two large pools marking the spots where the twin towers of the World Trade Center stood. The names of every person killed on Feb. 26, 1993, and Sept. 11, 2001, are inscribed in bronze around the twin memorial pools. If you visited the memorial in the past and had to pass through airport-style security, take note: the memorial is now open access.

The museum is open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (until 9 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays), 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.

Recommended: 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 has been open for just over a year now, and — good news to GNYDM attendees — there is an entry point on West 34th Street, directly across from the south end of the Javits center.

If the weather is nice, you will definitely want to take a stroll. You can walk all the way down Gansevoort Street in the historic Meatpacking District. Along the way, you’ll see all manner of urban life, including the most modern architecture, interesting people, artwork, gritty buildings that will make you wonder how they are still standing and everything in between.

The walkway is open to pedestrians from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. through Monday, then from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. starting on Tuesday, get more information on www.thehighline.org.

For the adventurous: Rent a 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 or a seven-day access pass with a credit card at any station. 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 surrounding neighborhood, or visit www.citibikenyc.com. There’s also a smartphone app, called BikeShare, updated constantly, which shows the nearest stations to you, along with the number of bikes and slots available.

Added convenience: New Subway stop
For those who like to commute via mass transit, there’s great news: A brand new Subway station will open at the World Trade Center. It’s right across the street from the Javits. That means no more waiting forever to get a cab. The station, the first stop added to the system in more than 25 years, is on 34th Street and 11th Avenue.

You can catch the 7 train, which will whisk you into Midtown in minutes (or all the way into Queens if you’re headed out that way). For more information, including maps and schedules, visit www.mta.info/nyc.

A few words of caution
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, Dec. 2. Unless you are a huge fan of large crowds, it’s probably a good idea for you to stay away. 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 at 646-38-9947 (or all the way into Queens if you’re headed out that way). For more information, including maps and schedules, visit www.mta.info/nyc.

- Above, your trip to the top of the world starts the corner of West and Vesey streets, at the entrance to the One World Trade Center. (Photos/Fred Michmershuizen, today Staff)
- Left, Greater New York attendees can now catch the 7 train at this new Subway stop, located just across from the Javits Center on 34th Street and 11th Avenue.

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