

FYI News

New York City's Hotel Concierge Newsletter

may 2007

Concierge Corner



news from the Front Desk

by Peter Johnson

I just wanted to tell you a bit about the Les Clefs d'Or Congress held in Vienna, Austria. We lucky attendees began our journey on March 18th. The opening ceremony was spectacular: a marvelous palatial setting and an orchestra playing the Viennese Waltz. Day two brought the Board of Directors meeting in the morning. In the evening we were driven to a beautiful village for a *Heuriger* evening—lots of great local food, drink and music. A very informative educational workshop was held on day three at the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien (Museum of Natural History Vienna), followed by a tour. Day four was an all-day trip to the wine region around Vienna, and what beautiful countryside it is!

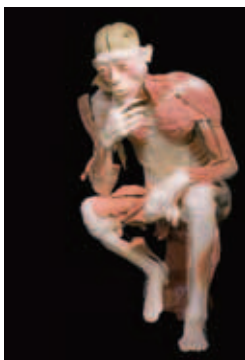
It was not all play. On March 25th was the General Assembly and elections. However, the final evening was the highlight of the entire event. A luxurious dinner was held at City Hall with the Mayor of Vienna. We were also treated to a performance by the Vienna Boys Choir, along with an orchestra and dancing. Other highlights included a performance of *Rebecca*, a smash-hit musical based on the Alfred Hitchcock film. We also had a tour of Schloss Schönbrunn (Schönbrunn Castle), which was breathtaking. When a city hosts a Congress, they pull out all the stops and Vienna was no exception.

So, again, we need your continued support and contributions so that we are able to wow the world in New York in August, as Vienna and other cities have done in the past. Keep attending those fundraisers and keep active with the committee. Words simply cannot describe how informative and spectacular these congresses are and, most importantly, they refresh all the reasons we are in this service business and maintain the highest of standards. Thank you, Vienna!

If you have any news or events you would like to share with the concierge community through *FYI*, please e-mail jbarbash@davlermedia.com.

SUMMER SIGHTSEEING 2007

Bike Central Park: Central Park's premier sightseeing company with guided bike tours, bike rentals, and pedicab tours. The main guide is Kenny Winter, a Native American who inspires visitors with his knowledge and appreciation of the park. Pedicab and bike tours are available by reservation only—call 917-371-6267 or visit www.bikecentralpark.com. Bike rentals are first-come, first-serve, so have your guests just show up at 231 W. 58th St. (Broadway-7th Ave.). 2-hour bike tour, \$40/person; Up to 1-hour (2-person) pedicab ride, \$75.



Bodies...The Exhibition takes an inside look at human anatomy

Bodies...The Exhibition: Real, innovative, groundbreaking! A tour through what goes on underneath our skin—and then some. Housed in the Exhibition Centre at the South Street Seaport, this striking new exhibit showcases real human bodies, giving visitors the opportunity to see themselves in a fascinating way like never before. Both captivating and edifying, it unveils the many complex systems of organs and tissues that drive every aspect of our daily lives and unite us all as humans. 11 Fulton St., 1-888-9BODIES; www.bodiestickets.com

Central Park Bicycle Tours will take visitors on a two-hour guided bike tour through Central Park. Not only is this a great way to learn more about the city, but it is great exercise as well. Included are spectacular views of the park and stops at the various locations that make Central Park so beautiful, including Strawberry Fields, Belvedere Castle, and more. Tours are \$40 per person (\$20 for children 15 and under), including bike rental fee & tour escort. Call 212-541-8759 for reservations and point of departure; www.centralparkbiketour.com



The New York Yankee Ferry aboard *Patriot* is just one of Circle Line Downtown's great services

Circle Line Downtown: For the 2007 season, Circle Line Downtown's (866-925-4631; www.circlelinedowntown.com) harbor cruises include the one-hour narrated harbor cruise aboard the luxury yacht, *Zephyr*, and New York Yankee Ferry aboard *Patriot*. There's also the 30-minute speedboat thrill ride aboard the *Shark* (beginning May 5) and the Downtown Liberty Cruise one-hour experience aboard the famous legacy ferry *Miss New York*. Each cruise is an experience of getting away—just far enough away—to create countless everlasting moments. Call 866-9CLINE1 for reservations. Circle Line's Statue of Liberty Ferry is also the only way to get to the **Statue of Liberty** and the

Ellis Island Immigration Museum (866-782-8834; www.statuereservations.com). Your clients can experience a special insider's view of the engineering marvel that is the Statue of Liberty with a choice of two tours: the Observatory Tour and the Promenade Tour. Both include a guided tour through the Statue of Liberty Museum, which features the original torch. To eliminate long lines, these tours are offered by timed reservations that can be made in advance, or before boarding the ferry to the Statue/Ellis Island.

CitySightsNY: Your guests can see New York from the top with CitySightsNY's buses—double-deckers that are top-seating-only, so everyone gets an unobstructed view of the attractions. Buses are furnished with state-of-the-art sound systems and urban storytellers who offer interesting facts about all of the city's famous faces and places. Their hop-on, hop-off tickets are valid for 48 hours from when boarding passes are issued, and they offer options that include tickets to the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island and Top of the Rock observation deck. 212-812-2700; www.citysightsny.com



CitySightsNY's buses are top-seating only

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Visit www.cityguideny.com for the most comprehensive listings for NYC visitors, with new additions every day.



Circle Line Sightseeing offers 3-, 2-, and 1-hour tours

Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises offer up some of the city's best sightseeing and entertainment cruises. Visitors can see it all on the classic 3-hour cruise or take in the highlights on the 75-minute or 2-hour cruise. They can also

try the romantic sunset harbor lights cruise. Circle Line's knowledgeable tour guides bring the breathtaking sights to life and illuminate the fascinating history beneath the "city that never sleeps." From May 1-October 14, your guests can join "Mad Dog" on *The Beast* for a thrilling 30-minute speedboat tour. *Pier 83, W. 42nd St. & Twelfth Ave., 212-563-3200; www.circleline42.com*

Empire State Building Observatory: Located on the 86th floor, 1,050 feet (320 meters) up in one of the magnificent seven wonders of the modern world, the Empire State Building Observatory offers panoramic views from within a glass-enclosed pavilion and from the surrounding open-air promenade for a breathtaking view of Manhattan and beyond, or an opportunity to watch the stars come out over the greatest city in the world. This is one of the most romantic spots in all of NYC. The Observatory is open 7 days, 8am-2am (last elevator at 1:15am). *350 Fifth Ave. (34th St.), 212-736-3100; www.esbnyc.com*

Foods of New York Tours offers unique and fun food-tasting and cultural walking tours through Greenwich Village, SoHo, the Meatpacking District, and Chelsea Market. They provide a non-touristy experience so your guests will feel like native New Yorkers! Tours include: "The Original" Greenwich Village Food and Culture Walking Tour; Chelsea Market/Meatpacking District Food and Culture Walking Tour; and the all-new Central Greenwich Village/SoHo Food and Culture Walking Tour, which explores areas not on the "Original" Village tour.) *212-209-3370; www.foodsofny.com*

Grand Central Terminal, the historic train station, is also a wonderful mid-town destination for shopping, dining, public events, and tours. Shop in over 50 specialty stores; enjoy elegant dining in Cipriani Dolci, Métrazur, Michael Jordan's The Steak House NYC, and the Oyster Bar; and find fresh foods in the Grand Central Market. Public events and displays run in Vanderbilt Hall, including Turner Classic Movies—Architecture in Film: "Celluloid Skyline: New York & Movies," May 25-June 22, and Architects of the New York City Subway, Part II: Squire Vickers and the Subway's Modern Age, July 30-Oct. 28 in the New York Transit Museum's Gallery Annex. *42nd St. & Park Ave., 212-340-2210*

Gray Line New York Sightseeing is New York's oldest and largest sightseeing/transportation company. Be sure to have your guests check out their incredible NYC Showbiz Insider Tour: On this informative jaunt they'll not only go behind the scenes at many of the city's showbiz institutions and meet a Rockette, they'll also get an intimate performance by a Broadway star. *777 Eighth Ave. btw. 47th & 48th Sts., call 212-445-0848 for reservations*



Gray Line offers bus tours of the city

Harlem Spirituals/New York Visions can take visitors on a cultural adventure through some of NYC's most fascinating neighborhoods. Harlem has a unique history in the cultural, political, and artistic arenas; Harlem Spirituals provides special access to that history through their varied and distinctive selection of tours that highlight the music, food, and architecture that characterize the area. They can take the Harlem Gospel & Jazz tour, or experience an African-American Heritage tour. They also offer special packages such as "A Great Day in New York" (\$135/adult, \$110/child), which includes a four-hour bus tour of Harlem, Manhattan, the Bronx, or Brooklyn, plus a Liberty Helicopter flight and a one-hour harbor cruise aboard Circle Line Downtown's *Zephyr*. *212-391-0900; www.harlemspirituals.com*

Helicopter Flight Services: If your guests would like to take in the sights of the city from the sky, they should check out Helicopter Flight Services. With one of their three tours—the New Yorker Tour (15 mins.), the Ultimate Tour (20 mins.), and the Deluxe Tour (30 mins.)—they'll view such famous sites as the Chrysler Building, Central Park, Statue of Liberty, Yankee Stadium, the George Washington Bridge, and the Financial Center. *Weekday and weekend locations; call 212-355-0801 for reservations*



Liberty Helicopter Tours offers several tours from the city skies

Liberty Helicopter Tours: Visitors can get a glimpse of the city from high above on one of many modern jet helicopter flights offered by Liberty Helicopter Tours. They feature breathtaking views of Central Park, the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, and many other sights and landmarks. There are many different packages to choose from, including A Taste of New York (5-7 min.), the Big Apple (10-12 min.), and New York, New York (15-17 min.). *Pier 6 & the East River, 212-967-6464*



Rachael Ray and Derek Jeter are among the "celebrities" you can rub elbows with at Madame Tussauds

Madame Tussauds New York: In the city that never sleeps, there is only one place you can send your guests to see more than 200 world-famous celebrities every day*. Madame Tussauds New York is a dynamic, ever-changing, and evolving attraction located in the heart of Times Square. Just in time for baseball season, Madame Tussauds hosts its very own "Ultimate Subway Series" featuring its newest figure (and first Mets player), David Wright, and Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter. Also check out special guest Ryan Seacrest joining Simon Cowell for the "American Idol" finale. Test your skills and see if you've got what it takes to become the next American Idol. (*All celebrities appear in wax.) *234 W. 42nd St. btw. Seventh & Eighth Aves., 800-246-8872*

Madison Square Garden All-Access Tour: You never know what you'll see on the Madison Square Garden All-Access Tour! Your guests visit the Knicks, Rangers, and Liberty locker rooms, tour the Theater at Madison Square Garden, and get a bird's-eye view of the arena floor from one of the exclusive luxury suites. They may even observe pro athletes practicing, today's top performers in sound check, behind-the-scenes activities of a live event, casts in rehearsal, or the hundreds of crew members needed to stage events. *Seventh Ave. btw. 31st & 33rd Sts., 212-465-5800*



Go behind the scenes at Madison Square Garden, home of the Knicks

NBC Experience Store/NBC Studio Tour/Rockefeller Center Tour: The NBC Experience Store is a 20,000-square-foot retail attraction featuring a huge variety of merchandise from favorite NBC shows! The huge space is full of exciting interactive activities and the "NBC Sweet Shop," a candy store to satisfy every sweet tooth! The store is also the departure point for the NBC Studio Tour, and point of sale for the Rock Pass, Rockefeller Center Tour and several fun tour packages and combinations. The Studio tour is a behind-the-scenes look at TV production in New York. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 49th St. btw. Fifth & Sixth Aves., 212-664-3700*

New York Party Shuttle Tours, NYC's most comprehensive 5-1/2-hour tour, combines driving and short walks with a ferry cruise past the Statue of Liberty. Stops include the World Trade Center site, Rockefeller Center, and the Empire State Building. New York Party Shuttle will be launching new three-hour tours this summer. The brand-new See Downtown, See Midtown, and Discover Uptown tours will be intensive tours that will really let your guests get to know each neighborhood! 212-277-8018; www.newyorkpartyshuttle.com

New York Pass offers admission to over 40 of the city's most exciting attractions, including the Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty, Guggenheim Museum, Madame Tussauds, the American Museum of Natural History, Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises, and more. Plus, your guests get a guide book, line-skipping privileges at select attractions, and discounts and offers at retail shops, restaurants, and theaters. www.newyorkpass.com; 877-714-1999; also available at Planet Hollywood, 1540 Broadway & 45th St.

NY SKYRIDE: Located on the 2nd floor of the Empire State Building, NY SKYRIDE is New York's ONLY virtual aerial simulator and a unique introductory tour of the city. Experience an exciting IMAX®-style adventure story combining high-definition digital technology, moving platforms and seats, and an 18-foot-high screen screen! New for 2007 is the opening of the 50-foot mural "180° of New York." 350 Fifth Ave. & 34th St., 2nd flr., 212-279-9777



Before you head to the top of the Empire State Building, check out NY SKYRIDE



Gray Line's brand-new Splash Tours go by land and by sea

New York Splash Tours is NYC's first-ever land-and-water visitor experience. Splash Tours' new amphibious AquaBus fleet, designed to evoke the memory of Henry Hudson's famous ship, The Half Moon, are helmed by a captain and first mate who will dress in period costumes. The 1-hour route starts in Times Square with an exhilarating multi-media experience; then the AquaBus splashes into the Hudson River for an explorer's-eye view of the New York skyline. Reservations required. 1-8-SPLASH-NY-1; www.newyorksplashes.com

New York Water Taxi: Your guests can hop aboard New York Water Taxi, the only water transportation service that shows them the city the way New Yorkers see it: in comfort and in style! A Hop On/Hop Off Pass (\$25) is good for two days of unlimited travel. To find out more about New York Water Taxi's routes, fares, and schedules, call 212-742-1969, or visit www.nywatertaxi.com.

New York Waterway Sightseeing Cruises are a great way to see New York. These cruises run year-round, offering views of the skyline, the waterfront, and much more. Your guests can take a night cruise for a more romantic atmosphere, or check out the City Lights Music Cruise, where they can take in those city attractions along with a cool breeze as they dance into the night. During the baseball season, the Yankee Clipper departs from East River stops at Pier 11 (Wall St. & South St.), E. 34th St., or E. 90th St. before every Yankee game and departs 30 minutes after the last out. Departs from Pier 78 at W. 38th St. & Twelfth Ave., 800-53-FERRY



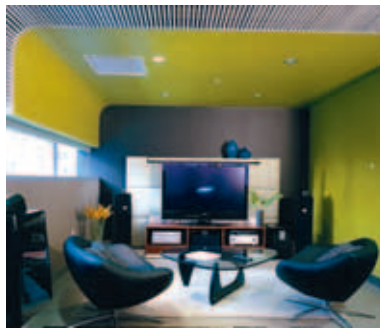
NY Waterway offers a variety of tours

NYC Run: Guided Running Tours: If your guests are looking to squeeze in a little exercise while taking in the sights, the knowledgeable guides of NYC Run: Guided Running Tours will help runners of all skill levels see everything the city has to offer while maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They offer more than 10 routes, including: New York Run (7.5 miles); Central Park (6.1- & 5-mile options); Greenwich Village Run (7.2 miles); 4 different Broadways runs; and many more. They can also create their own custom route. Visit their website for a complete list of running tours. 646-649-5321; www.nycrun.com

On Location Tours: Your guests can escape reality with On Location Tours, New York City's only TV and movie tour company. They can tour past the doorsteps of their favorite television and movie characters and real-life celebrities. Bus tours include: New York TV and Movie Sites (visit locations used in "Friends," "Seinfeld," "Spider-Man," "The Devil Wears Prada," and many more), "Sex and the City" hot spots, "Sopranos" sites, or take a walking tour of Central Park's movie sites (including "Ghostbusters," "When Harry Met Sally," and over 40 others). Tickets must be purchased in advance by calling 212-209-3370 or online at www.screentours.com.

Radio City Music Hall Stage Door Tour: Visitors take a step back in time by going on the Radio City Music Hall Stage Door Tour. They'll experience the behind-the-scenes magic of America's most popular showplace, as expertly trained tour guides take them on a one-hour journey through the history of one of the country's most magnificent national landmarks. Their hosts will even throw in a real-life Rockette for good measure. 50th St. & Sixth Ave., 212-247-4777

Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square: Your clients can experience the strange, the odd, and the unbelievable at Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square, an incredible collection of artifacts and exhibits of the bizarre, proving that fact is indeed stranger than fiction. Opening June 2007 in Times Square. 234 W. 42nd St. btw. 7th & 8th Aves., 212-398-3133; www.ripleysnewyork.com



The Samsung Experience includes this living-room area that explores the limits of digital culture

The Samsung Experience, a free, interactive brand emporium, provides a creative experience through Samsung's vision of digital convergence. Visitors engage both the imagination and the senses while exploring the art of the possible within the new digital culture. From smart phones to MP3 players to home-theater systems, the Samsung Experience shows how the latest technology can revolutionize the way that we work, play, and live. Time Warner Center, Broadway btw. 59th & 60th Sts., 3rd flr., 212-823-9520

Staten Island Tours: Tourists now have a reason to get off the ferry at Staten Island—your guests can use their own cell phones to explore the Staten Island Ferry and downtown Staten Island with Staten Island Tours. For \$5.95, they can "hire" Paul Sorvino (*Goodfellas*, "Law & Order") to be their personal guide to the amazing stories the harbor has to tell. They can start anytime by calling 718-297-8687 (TOUR). Concierges can offer their guests free access codes by emailing info@downtownsi.com. For more information on Staten Island, visit www.downtownsi.com.

Top of the Rock: By now you've heard about Rockefeller Center's newest attraction, the Top of the Rock Observation Deck—the 70th floor of 30 Rockefeller Plaza! To be accurate, it's actually the re-opening of the deck after a stunning makeover. The triplex deck has 360-degree views extending up to a distance of 30 miles on a clear day. Your guests can pick up tickets at 50th St. btw. Fifth & Sixth Aves., or buy timed tickets in advance by calling 877-NYC-ROCK.



A view of Central Park and the Hudson from Top of the Rock

Victorian Gardens Amusement Park returns for its 5th incredible season from May 26-September 16. Set in the heart of Manhattan's beautiful Central Park, this whimsical family amusement park features hand-crafted rides for children 2-12 and their parents, interactive games and activities, classic concessions, face painters, balloon sculptors, live entertainment, and more! General admission is \$6.50 on weekdays and \$7.50 on weekends; unlimited-ride wristbands are available for an additional \$12 on weekdays and \$14 on weekends. Enter at 59th St., & Sixth Ave., 212-982-2229

▶ FOR MORE SIGHTSEEING LISTINGS, VISIT WWW.CITYGUIDENY.COM

Concierge Events

Upcoming Events

- 5/10: B.B. King Blues Club & Grill
- 5/29: *Tarzan*

March provided *City Guide* and concierge with great opportunities at exclusive venues. On 3/15, it was an evening of dining, comedy and live music courtesy of the Greenwich Village hot spot **Café Wha?** (115 MacDougal St. btw. Bleecker & W. 3rd Sts., 212-254-3706), a favorite spot of musicians such as Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix. On 3/18, the **Russian Tea Room** (150 W. 57th St., 212-581-7100) and **Carnegie Hall** (881 7th Ave., 212-247-7800) welcomed concierge for a sumptuous Sunday brunch and concert at the revered Carnegie Hall. The Russian Tea Room's lavish interior provides a one-of-a-kind dining experience and features classical and contemporary Continental and Russian cuisine including their famous caviar and 40 unique vodka selections. On 3/22, **Natsumi** (226 W. 50 St. btw. B'way & 8th Ave, 212-258-2988) and the energetic Off-Broadway musical **In the Heights** (a riveting tale about the happenings of a hot summer in our very own Washington Heights) hosted concierge. Natsumi features cutting-edge, upscale Japanese food and also a separate lounge area that is already the place to meet and have a drink in Times Square.



Russian Tea Room
David Miller and Eli Marcus,
City Guide Magazine;
Ken Biberaj, The Russian Tea Room



Russian Tea Room
Jennifer Hempel, Carnegie Hall;
Eva Olsson, NY Helmsley;
Kathleen Nugent, the Regency; guest



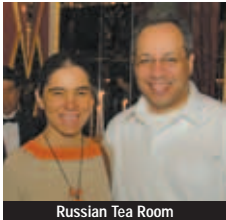
Café Wha?
Guest: Gabriela Popetti and Melanie Bruno,
Westin Times Square; guest



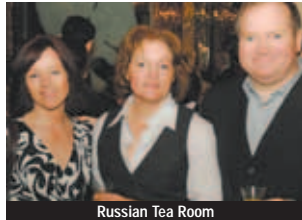
Natsumi
Heather Kaye and Dana Viltz,
W New York



Natsumi
Angelea Lui, Hilton NY; guest



Russian Tea Room
Guest: Eric Pinedo,
Renaissance Hotel



Russian Tea Room
Guests: Joel Lowden, Mandarin Oriental



Café Wha?
Guest: Kyra Gaydos and Charlene Ruiz,
Gansevoort Hotel



Café Wha?
Rani Marom and Rich Brownstien, Café Wha?; Vincent
Timpone, *City Guide Magazine*; Ofer Cohen, Café Wha?



Natsumi
James Lamboglia, W NY Hotel;
Janet Barbash, *City Guide Magazine*

5/17-29: Frank Stella: Painting into Architecture, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. & 82nd St., 212-535-7710. www.metmuseum.org (Frank Stella on the Roof runs through 10/28)

5/5, 5/19, 6/9: Triple Crown of Thoroughbred Racing (Kentucky Derby 5/5, Preakness Stakes 5/19, Belmont Stakes 6/9), New York City OTB's restaurants, 800-OTB-8118; nycotb.com

5/6: Five-Boro Bike Tour, streets of New York City, www.bikewhenewyork.org

5/5-9/16: The Sculpture of Louise Nevelson: Constructing a Legend, Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. at 92nd St., 212-423-3200. www.thejewishmuseum.org

5/9-5/19: The H&M High Line Festival, a new, multi-discipline arts festival, www.highlinefestival.com

5/11-5/16: The International Fine Art Fair, Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St., 212-642-8572; www.haughton.com

5/16-18: Annual Spring Pen Fair, Arthur Brown & Bro. Inc., 2 W. 46th St., 212-575-5555; www.artbrown.com

5/19: New York Toasts Italy, Otto restaurant, Olives restaurant, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Balducci's, and other locations; www.benemag.com

5/19-20: Ninth Avenue International Food Festival, Ninth Ave. from 37th to 57th St., 212-581-7217

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Events